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THE

BIOGRAPHY

OF

LEOPOLD DE MEYER,

IMPERIAL AND ROYAL COURT PIANIST,

By Diploma,

TO

THEIR MAJESTIES THE EMPERORS

OF

AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY PALMER AND CLAYTON,

CRANE-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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MEMOIR

OF

M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

[THE following biographical notice of Léopold de Meyer has been undertaken at the instigation of several friends and admirers of the great pianist, and has been gleaned from the most authentic sources. It was written previous to his departure for America, with a view to commemorate his successes in Europe, and to prove to the inhabitants of the New Continent that his extraordinary fame, already gone forth amongst them, is but the echo of the Old World. It is presented as a small testimonial of admiration and respect to M. Léopold de Meyer by a large circle of friends and acquaintances.]

Léopold de Meyer was born at Vienna on the 20th of December, 1816. He is of noble descent, and his family is of high rank, and was, at one time, possessed of power and affluence. His father was state counsellor and Knight at the Austrian court. His brother, Johan de Meyer, formerly held the rank of Court physician at Constantinople, to Abdul Medschid, late Sultan of Turkey, and is now Court physician to the reigning Prince of Wallachia, and also one of the most celebrated geologists of his day. At an early age he was sent to the University of Vienna, where he prosecuted his studies until his seventeenth year, being educated for the legal profession, and left the University at the close of that year, having completed his studies. Bred up with high expectations, and educated in the lap of luxury and ease, he was ill-prepared to meet the sudden wrench that awaited him. His father died suddenly from an attack of cholera; and, left to the bent of his own inclination, he determined to prosecute music, which was the delight and desire of his youth. Fortunately for the youthful Léopold de Meyer, his musical genius did not conceal itself amid luxury and foreign occupations. While quite a child he had an extraordinary fondness for the pianoforte, and was continually playing everything he heard by ear, after his own fashion; and before he had reached his sixteenth year, he had become so wonderful as an amateur performer, that his company was eagerly sought in the most *recherchés salons* of Vienna. At length his name reached the ears of the Emperor. His Majesty having heard that a young nobleman, whose father was attached to the Crown, had obtained, as an amateur pianoforte player, an extraordinary success in the drawing-rooms of the

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aristocracy of Vienna, expressed a desire to hear him; and accordingly the young pianist went to the palace, and performed before their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Austria, and the Court. From this circumstance and from this day we may date the commencement of the brilliant career of the future great artist. For nearly two years he applied himself to study and practice with the most indefatigable zeal and industry under Francois Schubert, Professor of the Conservatoire of Vienna, and Czerny; and before he was nineteen years of age he determined to travel, and create for himself a name that would blazon farther than the proudest ancestral banner, and fructify a talent that would prove to him a dearer source of wealth than the mines of Golconda.

His first journey was made to Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia, where his eldest brother is now physician to the reigning Prince, and President of the Academy of Science. In this city he gave two concerts, and the success he obtained was a splendid forerunning to all his future greatness. These concerts were given under the immediate patronage of the Prince, who had already heard him in Vienna. From Bucharest he proceeded to Jassy, the capital of Moldavia. He was bearer of a letter to the Prince of this place, who received the young pianist with the greatest favour, and patronised two concerts he gave. In the latter end of this year, 1835, M. De Meyer went to Odessa. On the day of his arrival at this city, at the request of Prince Nicolas Galitzin, he performed at a concert given for the benefit of the poor inhabitants, to which Madame the Countess Woronzow, wife of the Governor-General of Lower Russia, lent her valuable assistance. The reception which Léopold de Meyer met with at this concert determined him to give one at the theatre; and no sooner had he announced this determination than every seat in the house was taken. The receipts resulting from this performance amounted to no less a sum than five thousand rubles. A second concert was given by him in the Hall of the Bourse with the like success.

It was during Léopold de Meyer's sojourn at Odessa that he became acquainted with the Count Witte, General-in-Chief of the Russian cavalry, with whom he undertook his next and most important journey to St. Petersburg. The acquisition of the count's friendship was of great service to the youthful artist in the Russian capital. Of his introduction at the imperial palace we find the following anecdote in the journals of the day:—

> Some days after the Count Witte's arrival at St. Petersburg, having the honour to dine with their Imperial Majesties, he related that he had journeyed from Odessa with a young pianist of extraordinary merit, whereupon the Empress, enchanted with the account, instantly despatched one of her coaches for M. De Meyer, determined on hearing him that same evening at the court. He accordingly came to the palace and played his fantasies from themes on *Sonnambula* and *Anna Bolena*, which produced an astonishing effect on every one present. The Empress, after hearing the first *morceau*, rose from her seat, and approaching the piano remained standing behind the chair during the whole performance, uttering aloud frequent demonstrations of surprise and delight.

Soon after his arrival in the capital of the Czars, Léopold de Meyer gave a grand concert at the Theatre Royal, which realized thirteen thousand rubles. The whole of the royal family were present, together with the Prince Royal of Prussia and the *élite* of the Russian nobility. During the concert his Majesty the Emperor Nicolas sent for M. De Meyer, and engaged him to lend his assistance at a concert in the palace, which was to be held a few days afterwards in honour of the visit of the Prince Royal of Prussia.

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The engraving opposite represents M. De Meyer's performance at the imperial palace, in presence of their Majesties the Emperor and Empress, the Prince Royal of Prussia, &c. &c.

After this concert Léopold de Meyer received from the hands of the Emperor and Empress testimonials the most flattering to an artist; for, at the same time that he was presented with a magnificent diamond ring both from the Emperor and Empress, he obtained the nomination by diploma of *pianiste extraordinaire* to the Russian Court, and was enrolled honorary member of the Philharmonic Society of St. Petersburg.

Léopold de Meyer about this time was engaged, in conjunction with the celebrated violinist, Polonais Lipinski, to perform at the festival to be held on the occasion of the grand military encampment, which the Emperor ordered at Wosnesenks. Other engagements of profit and exaltation awaited him in every direction. His successes at St. Petersburg were everywhere unparalleled. In private saloon or public hall he was alike the universal theme of admiration and astonishment. Never had the Muscovites heard any performer on any instrument in any wise comparable to him; and the name of Léopold de Meyer is coupled to this day with human perfectibility on the piano.

From hence, after a sojourn of three months, he departed for Moscow, where report had already heralded his fame. The enthusiasm he excited in the second capital was not a whit less than that he originated at St. Petersburg. Princes, potentates, and nobles, vied with each other who should do him greatest favours. Concerts, assemblies, soirées, routs, fêtes, all were given for his especial introduction. Presents were intermingled with applauses, and the smiles of beauty were no less welcome to the youthful and sanguine artist than the huzzas and bravos of the rougher sex. In short, he became the lion of Moscow, and the eulogia heaped upon him were veritably sufficient to turn any moderate man's brain.

It was during his sojourn in this city that Thalberg, the celebrated pianist, paid his visit to Moscow, and Léopold de Meyer, setting aside all petty feelings of envy or jealousy, which, we are sorry to say, but too frequently exists in the musical profession, received him with the greatest kindness and hospitality, gave him the use of his carriage, introduced him into the most aristocratic circles of Moscow, and spared no trouble or expense to advance him in his profession. For the sake of humanity and the musical art we are grieved to record that all this friendship and most kindly feeling was, at a subsequent period, most ungenerously requited. We do not think it of sufficient consequence to mention in detail M. Thalberg's ingratitude and ungentlemanly conduct to Léopold de Meyer at Paris, of which too many were witnesses to afford the smallest grounds of doubt.

While joining the names of these two pianists, we think it will not be out of place here to refer to an article in the most celebrated and impartial musical journal in Paris, criticising the performances of both :—

Un pianiste *extraordinaire*, le mot cette fois est vrai, fleurit dans ce moment à Paris; il se nomme, vous le savez déjà, Léopold de Meyer. Ce nouvel artiste ne peut et ne doit être comparé à personne; c'est un nouveau phénomène qui s'est levé à l'horizon musical. Léopold de Meyer fait avec un doigt ce que d'autres ne peuvent faire avec les deux mains; il est impossible de pousser plus loin la force et l'agilité. *La Marche Marocaine*, ses nocturnes, *Depart et Retour*, *Bajazet*, *Norma*, *Lucresia*, *le Galop de Bravoure*, sont les morçeaux de sa composition qu'il a adoptés, et dans lesquels il déploie toute l'élégance, toute la prestesse, toute la vigueur de son beau talent. A cotè du jeu de Meyer,

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l'exécution de Thalberg est bien froide et bien monotone. Lèopold de Meyer dépasse Thalberg de huit doigts sur dix, c'est-à-dire que Meyer produit à peu près huit fois plus d'effet que Thalberg.—*La France Musicale*, 19 Janvier, 1845.

TRANSLATION.

An *extraordinary* pianist—the word is this time true—flourishes at this moment in Paris; his name is—you already divine it—Léopold de Meyer. This original artist cannot and should not be compared with any other; he is a new phenomenon that has dawned in the musical horizon. Léopold de Meyer executes with one finger what others cannot accomplish with both hands. It is impossible to carry to a greater extent either power or agility. The *Marche Marocaine*, his *Notturnes*, the *Depart et Retour*, *Bajazet*, *Norma*, *Lucresia*, *le Galop de Bravoure*, are the pieces of his composition which he has adopted, and in which he displays all the elegance, all the facility of executancy, all the thunder of his extraordinary genius. Compared to the achievement of Léopold de Meyer, the performance of Thalberg is very frigid and very monotonous. Léopold de Meyer surpasses Thalberg by an addition of eight fingers to his ten; that is to say, Meyer produces eight times more effect on the piano than Thalberg.—*Musical World*, February, 1845.

In consequence of his extraordinary successes, and the high favour in which he was received wherever he abode, we find Léopold de Meyer sojourning in Russia for nearly the space of eight years—that is, from 1835 to 1843. During this long period he visited all the principal cities of the empire. Besides St. Petersburg and Moscow, he visited Warsaw, Kracow, Kiev, Kursk, and several other cities of inferior note. His progress was invariably marked with the same happy fortune and the same good feeling. Favouritism and success seemed like attendant divinities hovering round his footsteps. At length, in consequence of an invitation from his brother Johan, court physician to the late Turkish Sultan, he left Russia, and proceeded once more to Wallachia, and from thence, in company with Prince Bibesko, a magnificent patron of the fine arts, and under his protection, he set out for Constantinople. Here he remained by special invitation for three months at the residence of the British ambassador, Sir Stratford Canning, who honoured him with his friendship and protection. Through the instrumentality of Sir Stratford Canning, he obtained a personal introduction to the Sultan. He was commanded to play before the Sultan in the seraglio, and Léopold de Meyer sent his own piano of Erard's manufactory thither. The Sultan was amazed and delighted; and on his departure covered him with testimonials of his munificence, among which we may mention, a splendid Turkish dagger and superb snuff-box, both gorgeously set in brilliants.

The plate, No. 2, shows M. De Meyer playing in the seraglio before his Sublime Highness, Abdul Medschid, late Sultan of Turkey, and the officers of his Court.

We take leave to introduce the following anecdote from the *Augsburg Gazette:*—

CONSTANTINOPLE.—Léopold de Meyer spent the summer of last year at Constantinople. He had the pleasure of performing before the "Sultan of the Turkeys." The *Universal Gazette* of Augsburgh has pleasantly recorded this interesting fact.—"The celebrated pianist, Léopold de Meyer," says that universal journal, "had the honour of *producing himself* in the presence of S. H. the Sultan, under whose sublime nose he was placed on the 19th of this month (Aug. 1843). The Chevalier de Schwarzhuber, dragoman to the Austrian *internuncio*, accompanied him for that purpose, on the morning of the said day, to the residence of Rifaat Pacha, by whom he was to be introduced to the Sultan. When they arrived, at the hour appointed, at the country-house of Rifaat Pacha, the minister of foreign affairs had them conducted by one of his *tchotadars* to the palace of Beilerbei. The great hall of ceremony, which, from its size and vaulted ceiling, is eminently suited to musical performances, was assigned to De Meyer de Léopold, who accordingly placed his piano there. After he had put everything in readiness, he was shown into a pavilion situate outside of the seraglio (judicious precaution—the known gallantry of De Meyer being considered)—where he was requested to wait until the preposterously sublime Sultan should order him into his infinitely impossible presence—which terrific event occurred about two of the clock in the post-noon. De Meyer and Schwarzhuber were received in the most condescending manner at the entrance of the before-mentioned hall, by no less a personage than Riza Pacha, who, after a familiar chat of a quarter of an hour, retired into the inner apartments to announce to the great grandfather of the fixed stars, that all was ready. In a few minutes his Sublimity entered, followed by Riza Pacha and sundry eunuchs—while from the opposite door entered (fearful to relate!) the three secretaries of the cabinet. The Sultan then disposed himself, netherwise,

on an arm-chair which was pight for him on a semi-circular platform, turned towards the sea, and raised a foot higher than the floor. Riza Pacha stood at the sublime sides, while the other persons present kept respectfully aloof. At length the Grand Marshal signified to De Meyer, that it was the desire of the too-great-to-be-lightly-mentioned, that he should place himself at the clavichord, and play cunning fantasies. Whereupon De Meyer de Léopold extemporized a brilliant prelude, and glided imperceptibly into his *Anna Bolena* fantasy, at the termination of which the horrible Sultan expressed by a stare, that he was not displeased; and ultimately deigning to remember that he was not dumb, and that the language of sublime looks was not universal, condescended to indicate a wish that De Meyer, the expert pianist, would fiddle for him the Turkish tunes which he (De Meyer, the expert pianist) had arranged for the piano, and of which the Chevalier de Schwarzhuber had made mention in the conversation he had exulted in with Riza Pacha. Whereupon De Meyer brought down a brace of the most favourite airs (hares)* of the Sultan, which he had hunted up since his arrival in Constantinople, with the aid of the *Maestro di Capella* of His Haughtiness, (Donizetti Bey—brother of the remarkable composer whose works have swamped the civilized world of late years)—and dressed them in such a manner as marvellously suited the palate of the tremendous unnameable who sat before him. These airs De Meyer has transported to the pianoforte, in-a-not-enough-to-be-wondered-at manner—giving the effect of a complete orchestra, without adding, altering, modifying, or transmuting one iota of the national character of the tunes. The Sultan listened with intense interest, and grimly grinned his satisfaction. He not only conversed furiously with Riza Pacha, but he absolutely asked De Schwarzhuber how and when De Meyer had bagged these airs (hares)*, and if he, De Schwarzhuber, had ever tasted them before. After expressing his decided contentment, the Sultan ordered a self-acting barrel-organ, which happened to be in the room, to play several Turkish and other airs—which the organ did, much to the delight of De Meyer. Whereupon the last-named asked permission to play a cavalry march lately composed by him. The *Padichah* listened to this with hungry curiosity, and asked many questions of the artist, and especially at what age he had commenced the study of music. The Sultan demanded yet another piece. De Meyer responded by his *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the most brilliant of all brilliant fantasies, which appeared, more than all, to captivate "Him of the Turkeys." He rose from his seat, approached the clavichord, curiously and constantly regarded the pianist with an air of much benevolence—following eagerly the roulades, skips, crossings, and other cunning devices with which the fantasy abounds. De Meyer having ended, the Sultan said other pleasantries to him, and jocosely observed that he played better than Donizetti, which, doubtless, that *maestro* would allow. To all of which De Meyer responded with profuse acknowledgments of the honour which had been accorded him. Whereupon Riza Pacha approached him, and presented him, on the part of S. H., with a gold snuff-box, garnished with brilliants, as a souvenir—pronouncing the word in Turkish, according to the wish of the Sultan, who himself uttered the word several times, with emphasis, "*Trwzlmdk, Trwzlmdk, Trwzlmdk!*" De Schwarzhuber also got a gold box from the same quarter; after which His Sublimity quitted the hall. Riza Pacha once more expressed the high satisfaction which the Sultan had received from the playing of the young *virtuoso*, and added these words:—"M. Léopold de Meyer is decidedly a great artist,—and we all know, here, how to appreciate talent."—*Gazette Universelle d'Augsburgh*, Aug., 1844.

* * *

We may also quote, as referring to this period, the following quaint anecdote from the *Sunday Times* and *Musical World*:—

"Upon the present young Sultan coming to the throne, not only *wine* was forbidden throughout his dominions, but even *music!* But the taste for the magic god has, within the last few years, spread so rapidly throughout Turkey, that the Sultan's command has gone forth unheeded. The Turks will assuredly never abolish music, however they may discountenance wine."

We can answer for the above. Since the Sultan made the acquaintance of the jovial pianist Léopold de Meyer, he has been music-mad—and *many a bottle have they quaffed together*, under the rose. The fact is the Sultan is, at heart, a *bon vivant* and a boon companion. He loves a good dinner and a flask of Rhenish as much as the humblest of his subjects. He loves also a pretty girl—but his taste that way is sufficiently notorious. In Léopold de Meyer he met one after his own heart—and the first night of their acquaintance they got "jolly" together. De Meyer played the Sultan into ecstasies—and bottle after bottle so raised the spirits of him of "all the Turkeys," that he fairly threw his arms round De Meyer's neck and hugged him. Since then music has been at a premium in Constantinople—wine is *in statu quo*—women more than ever adored—and in honour of Léopold de Meyer, a statue will be forthwith erected.—*Musical World*, Aug. 8, 1844.

During his stay at Constantinople he performed at the residence of Count Sturmer, the Austrian ambassador; at Baron Bourgueney's, the French ambassador; at the Chevalier de Titoff's, the Prussian ambassador; and received special invitation from Riza Pacha, the Prime Minister; and Rifaat Pacha, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

As a trait of national manners, we shall relate an amusing anecdote which took place at the house of the Prime Minister of Turkey, previous to M. De Meyer's performance there.

* This *pun* is literally traduced from the *Augsburgh Journal*.

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As usual he had sent his grand piano before him with the legs unscrewed, and the Turks, not understanding the utility of these partitions of furniture, they being accustomed on all occasions to sit on ottomans, could not conceive how the instrument should be raised to permit the performer to play. At last five Turks were summoned, who were ordered to place themselves on all fours, and the piano being laid horizontally on their backs, they thought would afford a sufficient elevation to the player. Léopold de Meyer's entrance set all to rights, and released the poor Turks from their "durance vile."

In Turkey, in addition to Constantinople, Léopold de Meyer visited Adrianople, Bucharest, Jassy, and other places.

From Turkey M. De Meyer retraced his steps to his native city, Vienna, giving concerts *en route*, at each and all of which he obtained the most enthusiastic applauses from all classes. On his arrival at Vienna he gave seven concerts, at the greater number of which the Imperial Court were present; and it is needless to say his reception was flattering beyond all that preceded. He was made pianist by special appointment and diploma to the Emperor of Austria, and was also enlisted honorary member of the Conservatoire of Vienna.

The opposite plate represents M. De Meyer performing before the Imperial Court of Austria.

In 1843 and 1844 we find the great pianist paying visits to the principal cities of Austria. From the capital he repaired, consecutively, to Presburg, Buda, Lemberg, Crakow, Cernowitz, &c. &c. &c. From thence he proceeded to the German states, and, at Francfort and Darmstadt especially, his success was unbounded. In the former city he gave three concerts at the theatre, and completely nullified the effects previously produced by the great pianists, Mendelssohn, Döhler, and Moscheles. Words cannot convey the impression produced by his performance on the audiences of Francfort and Darmstadt. At every concert a perfect Italian *furore* was created, the natural phlegmatism of the Germans fading away before the miraculous powers of the pianist. Hitherto he had seldom or never played without one encore, but the people of Francfort encored him twice at every performance.

We subsequently behold him appearing in the Belgian states, Brussels, Antwerp, Louvain, and many others. At Brussels he took up his abode at the mansion of his noble friend and patron, the Duke de Looz. He performed with the most brilliant *éclat* at the Circle of the Fine Arts, and was presented by the committee with a splendid gold medal and inscription, and made an honorary member thereof. A letter from the Secretary of that Society, corroborating this statement, will be found among the testimonials in the Appendix. The Prince Chimay, President of the Circle of Fine Arts, became his most particular friend, and honoured him with especial notice and favours. In addition to his private engagements at Brussels, too numerous to be mentioned, he gave four public concerts; three at the Brussels Vauxhall, and one at the Philharmonic, each of which conferred a new leaf on his laurel wreath.

From Brussels he set out for Paris, where two days after his arrival he received special invitations from the Austrian ambassador, Count Appony, from the Duke de Cazes, from M. Lacave-Laplagne, Minister of Finance, and the Countess Merlin, &c. &c. &c.

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Léopold de Meyer gave four public concerts in Paris—two at Erard's grand saloons, and two at the Théâtre Italien. He performed at the monster concert of that wonderful and versatile genius, Hector Berlioz, held at the Cirque Olympique; in the Champs Elysées, before eight hundred musicians; and in a place where, from its immensity of size, no other pianist had ever dreamed of playing before. An accident occurred to him on his way to this concert, which had nearly put him *hors de combat*, being flung from a *fiacre*, and receiving a severe contusion in one of his fingers, which quite incapacitated him from using it with any effect. But, as one of the French journalists remarked, alluding to the accident and his performance immediately subsequent—" M. De Meyer seemed to us to have been able to spare more fingers than one, for we never heard such showers of notes, even from four hands, elicited on the piano, as he produced in his performances at Hector Berlioz' concert." Léopold de Meyer was encored twice at the monster concert, and the favourite piece, the *Marche Marocaine*, which he played there, was arranged by Hector Berlioz for his whole grand orchestra, and performed at the next concert with tremendous effect. It was the first time M. Berlioz found any modern pianoforte music worthy to be transferred into orchestral score.

We shall, in this place, present an extract from the criticism in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* on Hector Berlioz' fourth monster concert, as it bears us out in what we have advanced, and shows Léopold de Meyer in the light of an approved *musician*, as well as an applauded *pianist*.

La *Marche Marocaine* a été dite aussi fort convenablement, sauf quelques passages encore un peu confus; mais qu'une seconde exécution rendra plus nets et mieux accusés. Il faut avouer d'ailleurs que l'art déployé par M. Berlioz dans l'instrumentation de ce morceau de piano est chose vraiment extraordinaire. Impossible de traduire avec plus de fidélité le caractère de l'original. C'est à croire qu'on entend un immense piano *polyphone*, tel qu'en pourrait créer un Adolphe Sax. Malgré l'originalité de la couleur, la *Marche Marocaine* eût passé promptement comme toute musique moderne de piano; maintenant la voila coulée en bronze. La plume de M. Berlioz a donné à cette œuvre un brevet de longue vie; il en a fait un morceau d'art, presque aussi curieux en son genre que les effets singuliers du scherzo de la *Reine Mab* et de la *Marche des Pélerins*.

In no city in the world is pianoforte playing so well understood, so minutely criticised, and so thoroughly appreciated as in the French capital. Several first-rate performers are resident there, such as Kalkbrenner, Herz, Döehler, and others, who are all in high repute and esteem, and every season beholds a Listz or a Thalberg elevated into favouritism with the public. We are speaking from the best authorities, from the notices in the Parisian journals, and from the well-weighed opinion of the best judges, when we assert that the name of Léopold de Meyer obtains a far higher station in public esteem at Paris as an instrumental performer than any pianist who ever preceded him. Pianoforte playing at the present day has arrived at a pitch of excellence never contemplated by our ancestors. In no instrument has the march of intellect been so strongly illustrated and proved. Hardly a month passes in which some new invention does not display itself, giving more scope or more power to the performer, and requiring a superior grasp of mechanical skill. Half the world, besides, are struggling for pre-eminence on the piano, and where some twenty years ago one indifferent player might be found, fifty that might be called tolerable may now be reckoned upon. From such numbers it may be naturally expected many should arise, whom genius and industry have elevated into the first rank, and accordingly we find at the present moment a host of names,

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all claiming entitlement to the top of the tree. Certainly to gain that pinnacle among so many worthy candidates can only be the fortune of one richly endowed by Nature with her choicest gifts of genius, quickness, and taste, wrought to perfection by indefatigable zeal, energy, and industry. That Léopold de Meyer possesses every qualification to place him highest among the high, we never entertained the shadow of a doubt from the first moment we heard him; and we go to the fullest extent with the Parisian journalists, who have lavished on him every possible term of eulogy, and whose like praise to any other living artist would certainly be exorbitant and overstrained. New epithets were invented by the Paris *feuillitonistes* to describe M. De Meyer's powers and peculiarities, and burlesque casts in plaster and lithographic caricatures were seen in every shop, more truly

CARICATURE OF M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER, BY PATANIA, AFTER DANTAN.

testifying his popularity and greatness than all the praises expended by the entire press. It is in such waggish mode the wits of the French capital are wont to display their talent on those—and those only—of highest note. Witness their casts of Rossini, Paganini, and Berlioz. It is only at such quarry in its "pride of place" they condescend to let fly the kestrels of their wit.

During his stay at Paris, besides the four concerts we have noticed above, Léopold de Meyer performed at nearly forty others.

Plate 4 represents him playing before the King and Queen of the French.

From Paris he proceeded last year, 1844, to London, in which capital, at the same moment, were found Thalberg, Mendelssohn, Döehler, Moscheles, and several native

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there is nothing to eat or drink, and when hunger is gnawing him, he has but one of two things to choose either to turn within himself and reflect, or to look around him and examine his neighbours. In his quality of observer *par état*, our friend adopted the latter resolution. In front of him, and alone at a small table, just suited for one person, a large and fresh-looking young man was enjoying himself before a juicy dinner, flanked on either hand by a pint bottle of sherry and a ditto of claret. His lips were smiling, his eyes soft and limpid; and perfectly at his ease he was eating and drinking after the manner of one who desired the good things of life, and knew how to use them. "Where the devil have I seen this gentleman?" said our literary friend to himself; "he is not a Frenchman, still less is he English; but to whatever region he belongs, be it torrid, tropic, or icy, he certainly does honour to his dinner . . . "Garçon! my dinner, if you please?" "Directly, sir." This answer of the waiter was an unconscionable stratagem, for a full half hour rolled on, and no dinner greeted the hungry eyes of the *littérateur*. He had, however, the pleasure (if pleasure it could be called under existing circumstances) of following in its different phases the banquet of the stout gentleman opposite, as the contents of the dishes disappeared, one by one, in quick succession. The dinner of the stranger consisted of soup *à la Créoy*, a plate of salmon, a *vol au vent à la financiere*, next *coutelettes Soubise*, and afterwards an *omelette soufflé*. Then followed a plentiful dessert, the whole winding up with a cup of coffee. "This fellow understands perfectly well the physiology of dining," said the literary gentleman to himself, while his stomach was resolving the problem of empty space; "but I cannot be content with this feasting through the eyes. . . . Here. . . . Garçon!" So saying, he seized the waiter by the skirt, and called to him with the impetuosity of one who thought of nothing besides his rage and his appetite, "Why don't you serve me?"—"Monsieur," answered the domestic, "we have got no sole, nor *poulet sauté*, and the oven is too cold now for a *soufflé*."—"How is it, after waiting an hour and a half, you tell me this disaster? Very well, then; let me have a *fricandeau* as soon as possible, and *petits pois à la Française*."—"Monsieur," observed the burly gentleman opposite, with an accent slightly teutonic, "there have been numerous dinners to-day; you had better address yourself to that fat fellow, the head waiter; he will see you served more promptly. As for me, that I may not be kept waiting, I order every day the same dinner, that my name may be engraven, like the inscription on a medal, on the thick skull of the garçon, and he may not commit towards me the same mistake to which you have now been the victim."

This answer, full of true practical philosophy, and perfectly applicable to the exigencies of the place, made our friend return to himself, and armed him with the patience of a Mohican. Fortune at last recompensed him, thirty minutes afterwards, in setting before him a rump-steak and an *artichaux barigoul*. It was not precisely what he ordered; but, a very delectable conversation with his neighbour opposite happening to engage his attention, he abstained himself from further recrimination, and resigned himself to his dinner.

A journal which the gentleman of the *stereotyped* dinner was running his eye over, gave naturally a political turn to their colloquy. The new acquaintance made some observations upon the recent changes of the Ottoman ministry; he spoke of the Sultan, of Rizza Pacha, of Redschid Pacha, of Chékib Effendi; reviewed the affairs of the *Vixen*; cited Sir Stratford Canning and Mr. Bell, and hazarded some remarks on the warfare in the Caucasus. He next discoursed of Constantinople, Péra, Scutari, Smyrna, Odessa, Adrianople, and Athens, intermingling in his recital the names of Turks and eminent Greeks, all after the manner of one quite familiar with the persons and customs of the country. Our literary friend, who knew Asia-Minor as well as the Abbé Barthelemy, without seeing one or the other, more than the author of *Anacharsis*, listened with such seeming pleasure to the traveller, that the latter, in a moment of sympathetic delight, offered him a glass of champagne. This was accepted, and followed by many others. Intimacy soon established itself, and then there passed between these two men exercises and displays of mental power and capacity, which, unhappily, we have not in our means to record. Passing from the East, they conversed on the different nations of Italy, Germany, France, and England; and in every state our literary friend found his new acquaintance conversant with its customs, and having spoken with sovereigns, ambassadors, princes, and nobles.

"Who the deuce can be my interlocutor?" said the man of letters to himself. "This facility of character is, at least, an anomaly in a country where each person is accustomed to hold himself dumb as a post before his fellow; and then these excitations over the champagne! London is full of Greek exiles, expert cheats, sharpers with gilded lips, who rifle you in the most charming manner, and possess a fund of the true *savoir vivre*. Certainly my new acquaintance can be no other than one of those rascally industrials."

Our friend suddenly remembered that he was a man of letters, and that, consequently, having nothing in common with a Spanish galleon, either in respect of form or possessions, he could not excite any idea of cupidity. This happy comparison which formed an image in his mind drove away all suspicion. Besides, his neighbour had too good a face to belong to the honourable company of English Greeks.

Suddenly the conversation took another flight. Russia was named. The stranger boasted of the qualities of the Emperor Nicolas, spoke of the beauty of St. Petersburg, exalted the merits of the Russians, the grace of their women, their agreeable mode of life, their luxury, the splendour of the Muscovite chateaux. According to him, M. de Custines had judged this city and its inhabitants in narrow views and clouded opinions, and substituted on many occasions prejudice for reasoning, and left without answer the why and the wherefore. The terrible despotism of Russia had its necessary cause, as well as the inanity of its pitiless policy. The stranger smiled as he advanced these exorbitant paradoxes, and a new light broke in upon our friend. "Ah! you have at last betrayed yourself, my dear sir,"—he thought to himself with uncommon sagacity—"you are no other than one of those golden agents, varnished and lustrous, which Russia despatches throughout all the capitals, and who, according to M. de Custines, confer on espionage proportions the most gigantic and immoral. Ah! vile spy, the most abject of created beings, I shall pay you off in your own coin;" and forthwith he lavished eulo-

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giums on the virtues of the Czar Nicolas, and upon the tenderness of his paternal government; and put a prodigious restraint on his real feeling, endeavouring to persuade his interlocutor that his praises were not an odious mockery.

Notwithstanding this, the new friends walked arm-in-arm up and down Regent-street, sending forth on the evening air wreaths of smoke from two *regalias*. After a number of turns, the stranger said, "Will you walk to my chambers, and rest awhile. I reside quite at hand?"—"With all my heart," replied the other. The apartments were elegantly furnished, and the drawing-room contained a splendid new grand piano. "Are you a musician?" inquired our friend.—"Very little," answered the Thersites of the North; "but, if you permit me, I shall play you a *morceau* composed in Russia."—"Ignoble being," thought our man of letters while stretching himself commodiously on the sofa.

The Muscovite spy preluded on the instrument in such a manner as to give but a very poor opinion of his musical abilities to our friend. "He is a charlatan and nothing else," he said to himself; "but how is it possible that mortal man could obtain a spark of the fire consecrated to the arts living under those miserable polar latitudes!"

The attention of the *littérateur* was suddenly arrested by a lithographic portrait suspended from the wall facing him. He instinctively lifted his eye-glass, turned in the direction of the picture, read the name at the bottom, and jumped from the sofa. He regarded alternately the performer and the portrait for a minute, then going straight to the stranger, who was still striking the keys and smiling, "Come, Léopold de Meyer, we have had enough of pleasantry like that; play me, in compensation, your *Marche Marocaine*."

Thus you see Léopold de Meyer is not merely the prince of pianists—he is also a man of address, wit, and humour.

VICOMTESSE P. DE MALLEVILLE.

M. De Meyer has given instructions during the season in several of the most aristocratic houses in London. His pupils have, for the most part, made extraordinary progress; and we are authorised to state that one young gentleman, whom he has taught, Robert Green, Esq., of Montague-house, Eltham, Kent, has turned out, in a short time under his tuition, a first-rate pianist, and imitates all De Meyer's most difficult points of execution with singular felicity and accuracy.

Léopold de Meyer has, some time since, indulged in the desire, he is now about accomplishing, of proceeding to America. In love for the fine arts, and in patronising them, the Americans yield to no people on the face of the globe. Every artist, of whatever country, clime, or name, is received with open arms; and their purse-strings are cut, and their voices are lifted up, that the stranger may depart with profit and applause. Be it Macready or Malibran, Braham or Ole Bull, alike the path of fame is open to each and all; bring the artist only talent, glory will surely follow. But the Americans, though considerate, are a sensitive people, and love not to be imposed upon by mediocrity of talent: they are yet a young nation, but thought and judgment have gone forth among them, giving them taste and discrimination. He who goes amongst them heralded by a great name will most assuredly suffer, should he not fulfil their highest anticipations. Great as the name is which Léopold de Meyer has sent before him across the Atlantic, we have no doubt his talents will far surpass the most exorbitant expectations of the Americans. He is, in truth, the greatest pianist of this or any other age; nor can any instrumental performer who ever lived, Paganini excepted, in anywise bear comparison with him. For power, for delicacy, for energy; for variety, for facility of execution,—in each and all he stands alone and unapproached. He is a great master in the loftiest acceptation of the term; and centuries may yet roll over ere there will be heard another Léopold de Meyer.

De Meyer, in appearance, is exceedingly prepossessing. His countenance is open, frank, animated, and intelligent; and his features are expressive of indomitable good spirits and everlasting humour. Indeed, he is one of the best-tempered men in existence; and it is a rare thing to see him ruffled, even when provocation

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pianists of high name and estimation. But he had only to be heard once to make evident his superiority over every pianoforte performer that ever appeared in this country. It cannot be denied that his name stood by no means so great with the English last year as it has done this; but this may be most satisfactorily accounted for by the lateness of his arrival last year, and by recollecting that almost every concert was already provided in its programme, and that, consequently, M. De Meyer had not opportunities sufficient to be heard in England; but those who *did* hear him, paid tribute to his powers, and acknowledged his superiority. It will not be out of place here to quote the opinions of one of the first musical amateurs of England, who thus treated of him in the *Musical World*:—

LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

Fame and food are the spurs that urge on mankind in the race of discovery and invention. Ambition in the quick mind, and necessity in the indolent, are the main originators of every thing great and useful in life. To them must be attributed the progress of art—the march of intellect, the thousand secrets called daily into existence from the womb of Nature. Every hour discovery and improvement trample down the old-established footmarks; and man, uncontented still, calls for further change and innovation. What is once known is no longer wished for—it brings nothing new nor surprising. That faculty, perhaps superstition, of our natures, the love of the miraculous, is no small incentive to genius. Ambition is a desire to place ourselves above our fellows, and that desire is hatched into life by the expectancy of applause. But to gain that applause something new or astonishing must be struck out on the anvil. The world's wide mouth is all agape for the incomprehensible and the impracticable. The *nil admirari*, although the dogma of fashion, is its imposition, not its feeling. The human mind is never so pleased as when presented with that which is now considered inexplicable, and was hitherto believed impossible. The history of pianoforte playing is the history of every mechanical art. The first performer received adequate praise for his simple effects. The simple effects palled on the ear. Another came, and improved on his predecessor, and thus it continued, link by link, until we find the chain almost completed, beginning with the easy and ending with the wonderful. The call for this continuous chain of improvement must be referred to the public taste, and may be traced to the times when public concerts were first established, and solo performers brought into requisition. Man is a vain animal, and vanity is fitlier fed with the roar of lips than the thrill of hearts. When a composition or a performance received the hands and "most sweet voices" of the crowd, the author or player, rejecting his own judgment, or that of the better advised, appealed to the mass alone for approval and decision. In mixed multitudes the surprising will ever take precedence of the sterling. But the judicious may unite both; and, therefore, we find some who have followed and continue to follow the public bent, that are not altogether such fools as they who work for the few endeavour to establish. We certainly owe the perfection of instrumental performing to that love of being astonished that sways an audience, and will for ever sway them as long as human hearts and human tastes differ. What should we have heard of Paganini, were he condemned to an orchestra, to exhibit another's beauties, and at the best charm in the exhibition, in place of standing *per se*, called forth by the love of the marvellous, and displaying such powers as might well be writ down in the category of things superhuman? What should we have heard of Léopold de Meyer, were he drivelled down to a mere pianoforte teacher in some continental Hackney or Gravesend, were there no straining eyes and gaping mouths to urge him on his miraculous career? The mob is a strange beast—but, like other strange beasts, his might is great. Many-headed and many-horned, he sways like a tyrant, and, spite of the hate and opposition of the *select*, he leads and drives at his headstrong will.

Léopold de Meyer's pianoforte playing is, indisputably, one of the greatest wonders of the age. His terrific power, perhaps too often displayed, wins his hearers from that exquisite finish, which is, in reality, the chief excellence of his performing. But in this superfluity of thunder he merely succumbs to the appetite of the mob, and exhibits his knowledge of humanity. The tiniest hand of Beauty cannot sweep the keys with the same softness and delicacy when it pleases him. At times, indeed, the instrument seems touched by fairy fingers, and his music falls on our ears more like an echo than reality. In the *pianissimo* playing we are rapt rather than surprised, and admire how the same hand that wields Jove's bolts, can shoot Cupid's lightest shafts. Like Bottom, "he can roar you, an it were any nightingale." His precision and celerity are no less astonishing. Showers of octaves *prestissimo* without a note missed; passages varied with the most curious felicity, and executed in the most faultless manner; divisions, scales, sequences, cadences, modulations, all hurrying on unconfused and unbroken by a single error; the left-hand contending for masterdom with the right, leaving the mind undecided for this or that; a delicate aria introduced scarce palpable to the hearing, followed by a battery of notes, that shakes the air like a peal of musketry, altogether stultifies description, and takes sovereignty from the top of judgment. Such must be heard to be understood, and even then amazement forestals conjecture. Léopold de Meyer is intuitively a musician. It is apparent in everything he plays. His harmonies are always masterly, and frequently novel and ingenious in the highest degree. If he made composition his study, I think he would become a great writer. What I have seen of his in print bears testimony to an elegant fancy, and a mind dawning into greatness. I do not speak of the compositions he plays in public. These are rather displays for his fingers than cogitations from his brain. In

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conclusion, I think M. Léopold de Meyer a far greater man than is generally imagined. He is celebrated all over Europe as the greatest pianist of the age; but, unless I am very much mistaken, he is infinitely superior to a mere instrumentalist. I fear, however, he is the spoiled child of Gaze and Wonder.

The reader will find among the public notices in the Appendix corroborative proofs of the Critic's remarks.

But if Léopold de Meyer's name was not so widely diffused last year in England as his ardent friends and admirers would have wished, the wildest enthusiast in his behalf must feel gratified at the universality of his fame in this year, 1845. There was hardly a concert of the season, certainly not one of any note, in which he was not engaged, and at every performance he invariably obtained an uproarious encore. The first literary men of the day have levied taxes on their muse to do homage to his genius; the truthful pen of woman has not been silent in raising trophies to him; and the journalists, without a single exception, have done nothing else than expend terms of eulogy to do him triumph. It were an utter impossibility even to guess at the number of concerts, public and private, at which he has performed this season. They who know anything of the London season may have a faint idea of what labour he must have undergone, when we repeat there was scarcely a concert of notability at which he did not perform. Every concert at which he appeared was crowded to suffocation. At the Philharmonic Society, where he was engaged this season, he was not only applauded by the whole audience, but the orchestra testified by loud plaudits their admiration of his performance, and rapturously encored him.

Plate 5 represents him playing at the Philharmonic.

At Cambridge-house and Kew Palace, the residences of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge; at Apsley-house, that of his Grace the Duke of Wellington; the Marquis of Lonsdale's, the Marquis of Clanricarde's, the Marquis of Lansdowne's, and at several houses of the aristocracy the attestations of delight and astonishment at each performance of Léopold de Meyer are beyond words to describe. His success in the metropolis was so extraordinary, that Mr. Webster, of the Haymarket Theatre (except the Opera-house, the most fashionable theatre in London), engaged him for five weeks at an exorbitant salary. He was named in the bills as "the greatest pianist of the age," "the Paganini of the piano," &c. &c. He was rapturously encored at each performance. No pianist at any theatre in London ever before sustained such a reputation, or could elicit for so long a time the unanimous and untiring approbation of a dramatic audience. But, perhaps, the greatest triumph ever achieved by the great pianist himself was won by him at the two *Matinées Musicales* held this season at the residence of Mr. J. W. Davison, the well-known musician and editor of the *Musical World*. These entertainments were by far the most *recherché* of their kind ever exhibited in London. When we mention as executants, Vieuxtemps, Camillo Sivori, and Sainton, violinists; Moscheles, Sterndale Bennett, Benedict, Vincent Wallace, Holmes, Osborne, and Léopold de Meyer, pianists, besides other celebrities on other instruments, we have said enough to show a combination of talent never before brought together in a London saloon. When we remember that each of these artists performed in the most perfect manner the *morceaux* allotted to him, and that Sivori and Vieuxtemps

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played a duet of Spohr's for violin and tenor, in such a manner as was pronounced unequalled in the recollection of any one present, our readers may then have some idea of the triumph achieved by Léopold de Meyer, when we state, *he was the only performer who was encored.* Let it be borne in mind that this was no mixed audience, some of whom might, by being carried away by impulse, have drawn others into the vortex of their enthusiasm, but a select society of the leading musicians, amateurs, and *littérateurs* of the metropolis. But, some one may say, "it may have been *par hazard;* such things have happened, though of rare occurrence; had Léopold de Meyer performed at another time before the same auditory, doubtless he would not, he could not, have obtained an encore." Our answer to that is simply a statement, which is creditably known to every musical man in London. There were two *Matinées Musicales* in Mr. Davison's rooms, each *Matinée* was divided into two parts. In each part Léopold de Meyer played. *He was the only person encored,* and *encored at every performance.*

We shall here set down, as relevant to our biographical notice, three anecdotes which exhibit M. De Meyer in a different light from that under which he has been hitherto viewed.

It is not to be supposed that, among those who have listened to Léopold de Meyer's performances, several have not been found who, from jealousy or envy, or any of the many mixed motives of humanity in its desire of lessening those who are above them, have endeavoured to pull him down from his elevation. Envy and jealousy are, indeed, the inevitable concomitants of power and place; and he who can number no enemies in his art will barely have to boast of that mediocrity which spleen may overlook, and with which exacerbation may rest content in heedless observation. Léopold de Meyer, like other great artists, has opponents and antagonists, who, not being able to discover a flaw in his playing, have had recourse to criticising his compositions and the class of music he performs, asserting and insisting that such music as Bach's, Beethoven's, Mozart's, Dussek's, Spohr's, or other the like classicists, is totally foreign to his capabilities and appreciation. The whole colour for this assertion was taken from the fact that Léopold de Meyer invariably played his own compositions in public. The following authentic anecdote will set at rest, and for ever, so monstrous an error.

At the house of one of the leading musical notorieties of London, Léopold de Meyer was dining in company with other gentlemen belonging to the same branch of his art. During the evening he was invited to the piano, and, as usual, he performed pieces of his own composition. A conversation ensued subsequently, at which some one present remarked, "How great a pity it was M. De Meyer was ignorant of all the great and established writers for the piano;" adding, "what a tremendous effect he would produce if he would perform a certain sonata of Beethoven's in public!" This same astute gentleman took great pains to instil this doctrine into the mind of Léopold de Meyer, and proceeded to describe Beethoven's sonata in its several parts—how here the plaintive melody of the *andante* underneath his delicate touch would reach all hearts; how in the *rondo* his velocity of fingering and rhythm would transcendently exhibit themselves; and how the thunder of the *finale* would afford the highest scope to his might and power:—all very eloquently

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designed to show forth his own supreme learning, and Léopold de Meyer's profound ignorance. The pianist bore all this dogmatical counsel with the best possible temper; and at last, when the Longinus of music had completed his erudite strictures, he rose from the table, and, merely saying he thought he remembered something of the soneta, sat down to the piano *and played it from beginning to end without missing a single note,* and in such a manner as completely to electrify his hearers. The ice once broken, he performed exercises of Moscheles and Mendelssohn; *morceaux* of Bach, Mozart, and Weber, and finished, after an incessant display of nearly two hours, with the overtures to *Guillaume Tell* and *Freitschutz.*

The second anecdote takes us back to the first *matinée musicale* of Mr. J. W. Davison. We must previously notice a peculiarity in Léopold de Meyer at the piano, which arises from any cause but what a casual observer would be led to assign to it; viz., the violent heat into which he is thrown when playing. The perspiration literally runs off his brow like rain; and the natural consequence to which this might be inscribed would be effort and labour. We never knew an instrumental performer who underwent this same *apparent* fatigue, with the solitary exception of Paganini; and he, it is well known, was obliged to change all his under garments after every performance. That it is purely *mental* exertion on the part of Léopold de Meyer, we are not bound to say; but that it is not *bodily,* this anecdote will too plainly discover. After his first performance at Mr. Davison's, when the *encore* was unanimous, and the artist yet wiping the pouring drops from his forehead, it was remarked by one of the most celebrated pianists in the room, that it was a pity to *encore* him, as it must be impossible he could hold out, from the labour he had undergone in the tremendously difficult piece he had just played, and the appearance of fatigue he manifested. "Let him alone," replied one who knew him well; "he would play twenty-four hours in the same manner, and beat any pianist in the world afterwards." After the concert the company withdrew, leaving a few intimates of Mr. Davison remaining behind, among whom was Léopold de Meyer. "How dreadfully wearied you must be, after playing four such pieces," said a friend to him. "Pas du tout—pas du tout," he replied; and, taking off his coat and neckerchief, seated himself to the instrument, and played all sorts of things for an hour and a half. We have been assured by two gentlemen present, that they never heard anything to equal his playing the overture to the *Freitschutz* on that occasion.

The next anecdote we have to present is contained in an extract from a leading article in *Le Courrier de l'Europe,* a French journal published in London, and which we take leave to translate for the benefit of English readers. The journal bears date August 30, 1845:—

Let us return to London, and let us finish with a chapter which we may entitle, *The inconveniences of Myopy* in general, and the dangers arising from inspecting the work of M. the Marquis of Custines on Russia, in particular.*

One of our friends, a literary gentleman, something original and very *myope,* a few days ago turned into Verey's, with the intention of stopping to dine there, if he could do so. He awaited a friend who had promised to join him. After expecting him an hour in vain, and expressing his impatience by all sorts of emotions, internal and external, the gentleman demanded the bill of fare. He ordered—*they say, tell me what you eat, I will tell you who you are*—he ordered a sole with *sauce normande,* then a *demi poulét sauté aux champignons,* to finish with a *souffié au riz.* When one is placed before a table where

* *Myopy* is hardly an English word—it means *shortsightedness.*

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might well excuse a show of anger. In deportment and manners he has that ease and bearing which nothing but a consciousness of high birth and associating with the best classes of society could confer. In private life he is an inimitable companion, being a wit in the best sense of the word, and a most admirable mimic. Léopold de Meyer is one of the most acute and minute observers we ever conversed with: there is no escaping his shrewd glance. Whether it be a peculiarity or *bizarrerie* of manner that affords scope for his wit, or some strangeness of characteristic development that proffers food for reflection, it is seized by him with avidity, and used or stored for use. From his education he is necessarily a man of learning and acquirement; from his travelling and mixing so much with the world, a man of information and knowledge.

As a musician Léopold de Meyer is much esteemed, and as a writer for the piano he obtains a very high place. There is no composition of its class in modern times which has gained so much popularity as De Meyer's *Marche Marocaine;* and several others, especially, in our opinions, his *notturnos,* have the very highest merit. We shall subjoin a list of all his published works, which we have received through the hands of his publishers.

Nocturne—Retour et Depart.
„ Hortense.
Andante Religioso.
"Casta Diva"—Aria con variazioni.
Air Russes—1 Cahier.
„ 2 Cahier.
„ 3 Cahier.
Air Bohemien-Russe, 1.
„ „ 2.
Fantaisie sur l'Opera *Puritani.*
„ „ *Norma.*
„ „ *Semiramide.*
„ „ *L'Elisir d'Amore.*
„ „ *Il Barbière.*
„ „ *Themes Arabes.*
„ „ *Les Hirondelles* of Félicien David.

Marche Marocaine.
„ Napoleon.
„ d'Isly.
La Bataille de Saratoga.
Carnaval de Venise.
Souvenir de l'Europe.
Concert with Grand Orchestra.
Etude de Bataille.
Danse du Serail.
Une Polonaise brillante.
6 Cahier Valtzes de Bravoure.
Galope de Bravoure.
Arrangements—Overtures, *Guillaume Tell* and *Freitschutz.*
Air Turque, *Bajazeth.*
Grand Duo for Two Pianofortes.

Wherever he goes Léopold de Meyer performs on no other instrument than one of Erard's patent seven-octave grand pianofortes. He is fully justified in this selection, for it is now universally acknowledged on every side that there are no instruments in Europe like them. For beauty of appearance combined with strength; for delicacy and facility of touch; for power and purity of tone, they far surpass any pianos we have heard. The two huge establishments belonging to this house in Paris and London, we are confidently informed, can hardly meet the increasing demands for their new instruments. Léopold de Meyer has sent one of these, manufactured purposely for himself, before him to New York.

We shall now take leave of the subject of our slight sketch, to which it was impossible in a few hurried pages to have done anything like justice, wishing him success and fortune in the New World, at the same time not being able to refrain from a potent desire of wishing him a speedy return back again; for what would become of the London season, 1846?—what would become of the concert-rooms—the saloons—the matinées—the soirées—the attic refections at Verey's—the private circles, warm and select, without the enlivening smile and beaming front of Léopold de Meyer?

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APPENDIX.

TESTIMONIALS OF THE ENGLISH PRESS.

No. 1.

ELLA'S REUNION.

The last of these interesting *réunions* for the present season, on Monday, was a worthy climax to a series of performances which have been unparalleled in this country, partly owing to the extraordinary talent of those who have contributed their professional services, and also to the taste and judgment of Mr. Ella in restricting the programmes to music of standard excellence. Léopold de Meyer, also, was wonderful on the pianoforte; he seemed conscious of the "musical intelligence" of his audience, and surpassed himself. We trust that we may, on a future occasion, hear him play some standard production of the great masters, although nothing could be better calculated to develop his gigantic command of the instrument than his *Lucrezia* and a Turkish national march.—*Maestro*, July 20, 1844.

No. 2.

ROUSSELOT AND DE REVIAL'S CONCERT.

A very select and numerous company assembled on Tuesday morning at Mr. Roche's Lecture-room to hear the entertainment presented to them by these two distinguished artists. In addition to M. Rousselot's exceedingly fine violoncello-playing, he has proved himself a composer of very high pretensions. A trio for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, from the pen of M. Rousselot, played by Léopold de Meyer, Sivori, and Rousselot, met with much applause, though we are inclined to think Signor Sivori was neither as brilliant nor as perfectly in tune as is his wont. But every man nods at times. We had four solos played respectively on the violoncello, violin, oboe, and piano, by Rousselot, Sivori, Barret, and Léopold de Meyer. Léopold de Meyer played magnificently. We have never heard him to greater advantage. He produced an effect throughout the room that it is impossible to describe. His *pianissimo* playing is really astonishing. The most delicate bird cannot warble more *silverly*, if we may be allowed the word, than he can produce passages on the piano. And yet with what enormous force, nay vehemence, he executes passages that require power! The concert concluded with great *éclat*.—*Maestro*, July 20, 1844.

No. 3.

Like Thalberg and Liszt, Léopold de Meyer is not merely a brilliant and dazzling player, but a masterly musician, to whom the purity and beauty of his art are considerations superior to its embellishments and outward flourishes. The pleasure afforded by the rare delicacy, buoyancy, and lightness of his touch, are swallowed up in the amazement created by the seemingly headlong vehemence with which he bounds along the whole range of the instrument, as if rioting in the consciousness of strength that recognised no possible impediment, and disdained all the ordinary restraints that fetter and confound the herd of players. Other players play as if they were the servants of the instrument—deferential, subservient, conciliatory to a power that was only to be courted and seduced into complacency and generosity. In the hands of De Meyer the pianoforte is the creature of a wild and tyrannous caprice—the pliant, elastic, yet helpless slave of a fantastic and lawless despotism, with whom the wish to be obeyed is only synonymous with the capability of enforcing obedience. We do not exaggerate when we say that the most startling of Thalberg's *tours de force* are sheer frippery and feebleness compared with the prodigal splendour and solidity of De Meyer. This, we are well aware, will appear preposterous to those who have not heard the latter, but to those who have, it will seem the cold expression of an undeniable truism. All that Thalberg does with his fingers, Meyer does too; but he does as much more with his hands, as it were independent of his fingers. Thalberg plays almost wholly from the wrist:—Meyer plays as much and as well as Thalberg from the wrist, but he plays as much more from the elbow—nay, from the shoulder; and the eye of the spectator is nearly as much dazzled to look upon the whole limb in motion as it is to observe the flutter of the fingers. This extraordinary degree of action must not be confounded with mere redundant gesticulation that appeals to the sight and leaves the judgment

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unsatisfied. Not a muscle De Meyer puts in motion that does not in some way contribute to the completeness and entirety of the effect he aims at. Nothing would be more erroneous than to suppose that this exuberant passion and energy are identical with violence or noise. All the while he is electrifying his hearers with this unprecedented display of supremacy over the might of the instrument, he is charming them with a clear and unmixed development of its sweetness—ringing out as distinct as a boatswain's whistle in the roar of a tempest. While piling up huge and grotesque masses of harmony in seemingly chaotic promiscuousness before you, he never permits you for a moment to lose sight of the melody or theme; and the mode in which he contrives to preserve the melody is to us wholly incomprehensible—for while a shower of staccato or arpeggio notes flow out as it were in one copious and continuous current, as if several instruments were engaged in producing them, the melody comes streaming down from the piano into the base, and from the base up to the piano, *at one and the same time*, in two distinct tides, after a fashion to which our experience of pianoforte players—and we have heard every one with a name—affords no parallel. This was conspicuously observable in all the pieces we heard him in; but, perhaps, more so than in any other, in the fantasia on airs from *William Tell*, which we have no hesitation in saying was, take it all in all, the most extraordinary musical display we ever listened to.—*Liverpool Times*, Aug. 1844.

No. 4.

M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S CONCERT.—HANOVER-SQUARE ROOMS.

We had the pleasure of attending this gentleman's morning concert on Tuesday, and, as we fully expected, the room was crowded to excess with a most fashionable audience. M. De Meyer has been the *piano-forte lion* of the season, and we firmly believe that he will retain that honour for seasons to come. He is a wonderfully clever performer—one of the most brilliant it was ever our lot to hear; his style he has created himself, being perfectly original; in fact, *his* playing is music, not like most of the pianists of the present day: their performances consisting of noise and trickery. M. De Meyer first played a fantasia on "motives," from Donizetti's opera *L'Elisir d'Amore*, a most beautiful but difficult composition. It is almost useless to say that it was encored, or rather, the performer was encored: to our recollection M. De Meyer has always had to return to the instrument. His next performance in the programme was, Introduction and Variations on the *Carnaval de Venise;* again he drew from his delighted audience another encore. He is the giant of giant pianists.—*London Journal*, July, 1844.

No. 5.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

The benefit concert of this brilliant pianist came off on Monday morning, in the Hanover-square Rooms, to a very crowded and fashionable audience. The playing of M. De Meyer excited the utmost enthusiasm. The solos selected by him were all of his own composition, and consisted of his fantasia, on airs from *Lucrezia Borgia*—caprice, on *Le Carnaval de Venise*—and *Bajazeth*, a fantasia on a Turkish air. In the *Carnaval de Venise*, which M. De Meyer introduced by two charming notturnos of his own, he was rapturously encored, and the repetition of it excited still greater enthusiasm. The *Homage à Handel* of Mr. Moscheles, for two pianofortes, magnificently executed by the author and M. Léopold de Meyer, was the classical feature of the concert, and elicited the most zealous and unanimous marks of approval. This concert has definitely placed M. De Meyer, in the estimation of an English audience, among the most remarkable pianists of the age. "We anticipate," says the *France Musicale*, "that M. De Meyer will take *une eclatante revanche* this season, in Paris, and that he will not play the overture to *Robin des Bois*." To which we respond—"Hear! hear!"—*Musical World*, July 25th, 1844.

No. 6.

MADAME HENNELLE AND SIGNOR MECATTI'S CONCERT.

* * * * * * M. Léopold de Meyer performed his piece entitled "Introduction and Variations on a Theme from *Lucrezia Borgia*." The piece is a very splendid composition, and was magnificently played. He was encored by the united voices of the entire audience, and played his *morceau* with variations from *Lucia di Lammermoor* amid thunders of acclamation, that nearly obliterated the vociferations consequent on the other. * * * * * * He next played one of his Turkish melodies, which he arranged during his sojourn in Constantinople, and had the honour of playing before the Sultan. The piece is entitled *Bajazeth*. It is highly effective on the instrument, being very bustling, imposing, and full of fiery passages. The *artiste* was rapturously encored, and, on the re-demand, he played his new *morceau* on airs from *Il Barbière di Sevighia*. This likewise was greatly applauded. It will become most assuredly a favourite piece with the public. It introduces some of the sweetest airs from the sweetest of all earthly operas. But the most astonishing part of the performance is his playing two separate pieces with right and left hand—a *duo* with one, and a *trio* with the other. The effect produced was emphatically electric throughout the room. It was beyond a doubt the greatest musical treat we have had during the season.—*Maestro*, July 13, 1844.

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No. 7.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER AT WOLVERHAMPTON.

Mr. H. Hayward gave the first of a series of *soirées* at Wolverhampton, on Monday evening, which was well attended. M. De Meyer, pianist to the Emperor of Austria and the Emperor of Russia, performed several pieces on the euphonicon, fully developing the powers of the instrument. In speaking of this gentleman's playing, the ordinary terms of criticism will not apply. We agree with a contemporary, that to call it wonderful conveys but a vague idea of its excellence, of the extraordinary rapidity of the execution, or of the correctness and precision of every note. The audience were enraptured, as well they might be, and applauded and encored his performances most loudly. Of Mr. Hayward we can only say, as we have done before, that he is assuredly the first native violinist of the day. In his duet with M. De Meyer, and in a fantasia, he fully sustained his high reputation. M. De Meyer again delighted and astonished his hearers with a variety of pieces on the pianoforte. The more he is heard the more are his listeners lost in wonderment. The euphonicon, under his miraculous fingers, was heard to great advantage.—*Staffordshire Advertiser.*

No. 8.

Léopold de Meyer arrived in town, on Sunday, for the season. He played for the first time, on Tuesday morning, at the concert of Madame Caradori Allan, and electrified the audience with his *Marche Marocaine*, a composition full of wild character, and abounding in preposterous impossibilities. An introduction, *Andante Legato*, gave M. De Meyer an opportunity of manifesting to great advantage the exceeding beauty of his touch—the perfect roundness of his tone—the astonishing elasticity of his fingers. A duet with the celebrated violinist, Vieuxtemps, on airs from *Guillaume Tell*, was a no less wonderful feat of mechanism. Violinist and pianist vied with each other in raising the wonder and delight of the listeners. The duet purports to be the composition of De Beriot and Osborne, but, as played on Tuesday, certainly appertained in a greater measure to Vieuxtemps and Léopold de Meyer. Scarcely a bar of the original but was multiplied into impossibility by a coruscation of astounding difficulties. The performers were honoured by frequent and unanimous bursts of applause.—*Musical World*, May 8, 1845.

No. 9.

SIGNOR BRIZZI'S CONCERT AT THE ITALIAN OPERA HOUSE.

This favourite vocalist attracted, as customary, a large concourse of fashionables at his morning concert, in the great room of her Majesty's Theatre, yesterday morning. The entire vocal strength of the Opera—a corps unrivalled in modern times—assisted Signor Brizzi. Léopold de Meyer—whose epithet of lion-pianist has certainly not been misapplied—played twice. On the first occasion, being loudly encored in his extraordinary fantasia on airs from *Lucrezia Borgia*, he substituted another of his compositions, *Les Airs Russes*, which excited no less enthusiasm. In the second part he introduced his fantasia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, a *pot pourri*, in which are concentrated the *summum maximum* of modern difficulties, added to much that is elegant and graceful. The interpretation of this was marked alike by consummate mechanism and exquisite feeling. We have seldom, indeed, heard this great pianist with more earnest pleasure.—*Morning Post*, May 22, 1845.

No. 10.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S CONCERT.

On Tuesday morning a brilliant and fashionable audience assembled in the Hanover-square Rooms, the attraction being the first concert of Léopold de Meyer, the *lion pianiste* of Hector Berlioz. The chief interest of the concert was of course concentrated in the wonderful performances of the *bénéficiaire*, who was heard to greater advantage, because oftener and more at length, than on any previous occasion during the season. The pieces he selected to play were—First, fantasia on *L'Elisir d'Amore;* second, the *Carnaval de Venise;* third, the *Marche d'Isly*. The first, one of the latest compositions of M. de Meyer, is adapted to display to great advantage the various characteristics of his style. The extraordinary facility with which he ornaments a simple motive with a shower of brilliant and unaccountable *floriture*—graces in the truest sense; the exquisite delicacy of his touch in the softer passages; and, finally, the immense grasp and herculean strength of wrist, which gained him from the witty Vicomte de Launay the *sobriquet* of *ouragan harmonieux*, are, one and all, exhibited in the fantasia to the utmost perfection. The encore was enthusiastic and instantaneous. Instead of repeating the fantasia, however, the pianist introduced his quaint "Air Russe," one of the happiest effusions *du genre fantastique* with which we are acquainted. The second *morceau*, variations full of humour and *esprit*, on the "Carnival of Venice," a melody not the less delicious from its antiquity, preceded by the elegant *notturno* in D flat, was honoured with a similarly enthusiastic demand for repetition. M. de Meyer then favoured us with the *Marche Marocaine*, a *jeu d'esprit* which sets all competition at defiance by its incredible—nay, almost impossible—difficulties. The last piece which M. de Meyer performed was the *Marche d'Isly*, a composition full of wild beauty and melodramatic interest. The theme is original, and M. de Meyer has admirably availed himself of its marked rhythm and rugged character. There is a continuity in this *caprice* which says much for the musicianship of the composer. To conclude, the concert of yesterday added one to the many triumphs of M. de Meyer, and

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helped yet further to establish him in this country in the position of the first executive pianist of the age, a distinction he has long held abroad. His other qualities of grace, expression, and feeling, which are of the highest order, must not, in the meantime, be forgotten. M. de Meyer was assisted in his labours by the justly celebrated violinist, M. Vieuxtemps, whose exquisite rendering of the "Tremolo" of De Beriot won a loud and unanimous encore. M. Vieuxtemps also executed in masterly style a *fantasia* on an American theme arranged by himself. The oftener Vieuxtemps is heard the better he is liked, and the more completely he confirms the exalted reputation he enjoys on the Continent. M. Godefroid, the harpist who succeeded so brilliantly at the last Philharmonic, added, by a fantasia charmingly played, to the attractions of the concert, and the following vocalists sang with great success several solos and concerted pieces: Madame Eugenia Garcia, Madame Caradori Allan, Mdlle. Rolando, the Misses Williams, Miss Messent, and Signor Brizzi. The conductor was M. Benedict, who, as an accompanyist, is unsurpassed.—*Morning Post*, June 5, 1845.

No. 11.

HANOVER-SQUARE ROOMS.

M. Léopold de Meyer's concert, which took place on Tuesday morning at these rooms, attracted a brilliant audience, the area being filled with hosts of ladies crowned with the gaudiest of bonnets: the orchestra itself was even intruded upon by visitors who could make no settlement elsewhere, so that the crowd was as great and the heat as intense as the fashionable idler could desire. The pianoforte playing of M. de Meyer is one of the most extraordinary things of the day: his skill is unsurpassed as we believe it to be unsurpassable, for none of the lions who have of late years performed staggering wonders on the instrument have exhibited more facility of hand, or executed feats requiring greater preternatural accomplishment than he. The pieces he gave on Tuesday were well chosen to display his wonderful command. In a fantasia founded on airs from *L'Elisir d'Amore*, combinations of the most extravagant difficulty were introduced—extensions of the extremest kind, rushing showers of octaves, simultaneous movements in the bass, treble, and middle registers—in short, everything calculated to ensure amazement was compassed by his busy fingers, and with an accuracy which, beforehand, one would have taken an even bet was impossible. Being by unanimous consent called upon to repeat this marvel, he volunteered his "Russian Air," another vehicle illustrative of enormous mechanical power, and of fairy-like flexibility and refinement of touch. In the variations on the "Carnaval de Venise," mimicries are attempted of Ernst's grotesque effects on the violin, and, considering the inaptitude of the pianoforte for such feats, the comic colouring he achieved was really extraordinary. The rest of the concert was made up of accustomed matters. M. Vieuxtemps played a couple of fantasias on the violin with that supreme skill for which he is so conspicuously distinguished; and Puzzi and Godefroid captivated the audience with blissful tunes on the horn and harp. The principal singer was Madame Caradori Allan, but she was well enforced by Madame Eugenia Garcia and those two clever and rising vocalists, Miss Williams and her sister.—*Morning Herald*, June 5, 1845.

No. 12.

SIXTH PHILHARMONIC CONCERT.

Léopold de Meyer achieved a complete triumph. He commenced with his elegant *notturno* in D flat, and thence glided into his *Lucrezia Borgia* fantasia, which he played in a style that sets all mechanical competition at defiance. The *Lucrezia* being encored with rapturous enthusiasm, M. de Meyer resumed his seat at the pianoforte, and performed his "Air Russe," a composition combining enormous difficulties with the most graceful passages and pleasing harmonies. This was interrupted by frequent bursts of applause, and at the conclusion the "lion pianist" was cheered from all parts of the room. M. de Meyer may thus console himself for the unhandsome treatment of the directors, who refused to allow him to perform the "Concert-stück" of Weber with the orchestra; a more brilliant triumph he could hardly have achieved.—*Morning Post*, June 10, 1845.

No. 13.

The pianoforte playing of Léopold de Meyer needs scarcely a remark here, for a day rarely passes in which his skill is not set before wondering audiences. It is now a settled opinion that he distances every executant of the day in performances which require extravagant readiness and unfailing certainty. His touch is unlike anything we ever heard. Light, clear, and feathery, it produces the most beautiful quality of tone imaginable—a quality which is never disturbed or impaired, however great the rapidity, intricate the combination, or scattered the passage. The music he usually plays being addressed chiefly to the popular listener, who cares only for the manifestation of hand proficiency, he has given but few proofs of his competency to deal with the productions of genius; nevertheless, those who enjoy social intercourse with him describe his natural taste as being rightly directed, and assert that his pianoforte delivery of the works of the great masters is characterized by lively enthusiasm and sound discretion. The fantasia he performed on Monday night was founded on subjects borrowed from *Lucrezia Borgia*, and, being encored, he gave his "Russian Air," with the difficulties of which every concert-goer is, by this time, well acquainted. A contemporary asserts that he wished to play the "Concert-stück" of Weber, but that the directors made objection, for what reason it would be hard to guess.—*Morning Herald*, June 11, 1845.

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No. 14.

TO LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

(*Stage direction. Léopold improviseth.*)

Genius of sound, over the keys
  Thy marvellous fingers straying
Amid a thousand harmonies
  And fountain-notes are playing—
  Changing mood and temper so
  Swiftly, that we scarcely know
    What to feel,
    Or how to thrill.
Now—like an amber shower of rain,
  Glistening through the stormy heaven,
When the parting tempest-clouds
  By the golden light are riven—
Every note distinctly falling
  From thy fingers, pants and sighs
Its brief existence out in melody,
And then in the next beautiful harmony
    Melts off and dies.
And now a sudden change comes shaking
The delicate sounds, through their beauty breaking
As if a storm-god were awaking
    The slumbering thunder,
And the bursting roll of the tempest roar
Like the ceaseless surf on a rocky shore,
  From thy angry hand is flung—
      Anon—
    A sweeter and a gentler melody
      Comes stealing under
    The intermittent power.
    And then the thunder breaks,
    While through the pause it rises,
In whisp'ring delicate and joyous snatches.
    The troubled tempest-hour
    Is past. The sunshine wakes—
    The young birds sing again,
And the lazy ear's listening pleasure catches
    A voice of delight alone;
    As if a bubbling stream
    Were chanting its joy on its way,
To a thrush that is crouching over its sparkle
    On a bending ash's spray.
    —A change—again—
Such a deep, deep melancholy
Fills me with its weird-like woe
As the doleful cadences come and go—
Such a deep, deep melancholy—
    I could almost weep.
And then a music sad and holy
Like solemn hymns creeping in night
    Up some cathedral aisle:
      The while,
A most monotonous bass is flowing on
      Through all,
Like the long slow wail of an Indian song.
    Again—thy fingers fall
In thunder—it is the march—steady—
    And the roll of the drum
Heavily heard through the tread, as they come.
It is the charge—on—on—in the teeth
Of the bayonet bristling ready
For the work of wrath and death.
It is the cry and the scream—
The thundering oath, and the howling prayer,
The deaf crush of the trampled dead—
The muffled groan of despair,
And over it all the hurtling roar
  Of the rending grape,
Lending that hideous charivari
  Something like musical shape,
With the massive chords that thy fingers pull,
  Out of the ivory key's below,
As if every fibre and nerve were full
  Of musical instinct, and cared not how
  The sweat might rain from the beaded brow,
While they thumped and clattered, and hammered below.
      A pause again—
        Delicious—
    Thou genius most capricious—
    Where art thou hurrying now?
      Is it to Paradise?
        I close mine eyes
        And dream:
        Angelic melodies
          Stream,
    And now more earthly sighs
      Flow from thy hand.
    Love—rapture—joy—delight,
    And here and there a deeper gush
    Of passion, like desire's young blush,
    Colour the delicate notes,
        Crash, crash, crash;
          Pom, pom;
        Crash, crash;
          Pom, pom;
        Crash, crash, crash;
The sentimental steam-engine has done:
And all that rests of its miraculous power
Is the last memory-melody which floats
    Up through the listening air,
    Like the one pure love, known
    The one bright sunny hour,
    Which in a life's despair,
Grief, toil, and strife, stands out, beautiful and alone.

Morning Post, June 13, 1845.

No. 15.

MADAME CARADORI ALLAN'S CONCERT.

The concert-room at her Majesty's Theatre was filled by a highly fashionable audience yesterday morning, at the benefit of the above popular vocalist. The length of the programme forbids the possibility of giving anything like a detailed account; we shall merely, therefore, name the artists who assisted, and specialise the points most worthy of notice. The vocalists included among others the flower of the magnificent *troupe* at her Majesty's Theatre—Mdmes. Grisi, Castellan, Caradori Allan, and Madlle. Brambilla; Signori Moriani, Fornasari, Lablache, F. Lablache, Mario, and Herr Pischek. * * * * The performance of the pianist Léopold de Meyer created unusual sensation. Léopold de Meyer may at present

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fairly be placed at the head of the modern school. His originality is quite as remarkable as that of either Liszt or Thalberg, and in executive feats he surpasses them both. The extreme delicacy of his touch in *piano* passages, moreover, is one of his greatest peculiarities. He uses the soft pedal—*à una corda*—with exquisite effect. The variety and rapidity of his *floriture* is perfectly marvellous, while his extensions would seem to require ten fingers to each hand; and amidst all these extraordinary *tours de force* his accentuation never fails him, while his rhythm is as marked and his certainty as invariable as though his fingers were the component parts of a wonderful piece of mechanism. The *Marche Marocaine*, which Léopold de Meyer introduced yesterday, preceded by an *introduzione*, in which he showed to eminent advantage the extreme beauty of his *cantabile* and *legato* playing, has lately produced a great sensation at the principal concerts in Paris, and has been instrumented for the orchestra by Hector Berlioz, the celebrated composer, at whose monster concerts it has been executed with immense effect. It abounds in modern difficulties of all kinds, requiring a force almost Herculean in execution. It possesses, moreover, a certain rugged wildness of character which bears no small affinity to the music of the Eastern nations. M. De Meyer was received with the enthusiasm due to his great talent. * * * * A duet for violin and piano on airs from *Guillaume Tell*, between MM. Vieuxtemps and Léopold de Meyer, was a brilliant performance, and exhibited the wonderful powers of mechanism of both artists to great advantage. It was received with unbounded applause. M. Benedict, the conductor, displayed his accustomed talent and indefatigability.—*Times*, June 27.

No. 16.

M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S CONCERT.

A crowded and brilliant audience attended the second and last concert of this extraordinary pianist yesterday morning, in the Hanover-square Rooms. M. de Meyer introduced two new compositions on the occasion, both of which were enthusiastically encored. The first, a fantasia on Rossini's *Semiramide*, involves a skilful and effective treatment of the popular *andante* in the overture to that opera. Scale passages of immense rapidity, arpeggios of incredible extension and rapid successions, double notes for both hands, abound in this fantasia, the difficulty of which would baffle almost any pianist but the composer. In answer to the *encore* M. de Meyer performed his fantasia on *Lucia di Lammermoor*, one of his most finished efforts. The second novelty was a quaint and charming *caprice*, called *La Danse du Serail*, in which the exquisite neatness of the *staccato*, and the marvellous rapidity and firmness of the octave playing, displayed the executive talents of M. de Meyer in a new light. He may now be fairly placed at the head of the modern romantic school, both in regard to the unsurpassable perfection of his mechanism, and the variety and elegance of his style. The roundness and mellowness of tone, the delicacy and equality of touch, are as remarkable in the playing of this pianist as that wonderful executive power which has gained him on the Continent the *sobriquet* of "Lion Pianist. He also performed his favourite *Airs Russes*, and his new duet for two pianofortes on *Le Desert*, with Madame Dulcken, in brilliant style. His approaching departure for America rendered this concert one of additional interest to the admirers of Léopold de Meyer.—*Times*, July 1, 1845.

No. 17.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S SECOND CONCERT.

The second and last concert of Léopold de Meyer, previous to his departure for America, attracted a crowded and fashionable audience to the Hanover-square Rooms yesterday morning. The tickets of admission stated one o'clock to be the period for commencing the concert, but the programmes declared two o'clock to be the hour. The latter were correct, and one-half the auditory had to wait an hour in advance. The discontent was becoming general, but the appearance of Léopold de Meyer, who is an evident favourite with the public, soon restored good humour, and his first *morceau*, a fantasia on a *motivo* in Rossini's *Semiramide*, was encored with enthusiasm. This, one of De Meyer's latest compositions, and performed by him for the first time, involves a succession of unprecedented difficulties, which the admirable pianist accomplished with incredible ease. The treatment of Rossini's charming melody is varied and masterly. A *tour de force* of double notes, for both hands, and a *coda* of rapid passages of chords, produced an electric effect. On being encored, De Meyer performed his brilliant fantasia on *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The pianist subsequently introduced his *Airs Russes*; he afterwards played his new duet for two pianofortes, on airs from *Le Desert* of Félicien David, in which he was superbly accompanied by Madame Dulcken, who vied with the "lion pianist" in force and brilliancy; and lastly produced another new composition, *La Danse du Serail*, a work full of fancy and ingenuity, wherein the perfection of the *staccato*, and the astonishing velocity of the octave-playing, in which mechanical particular De Meyer is unrivalled, enraptured the audience, and won another loud and unanimous encore. The summit of executive perfection is achieved in this difficult composition, which is likely to be the future *cheval de bataille* of Léopold de Meyer.—*Morning Post*, July 1, 1845.

No. 18.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S SECOND AND LAST CONCERT.

The last concert of the great lion-pianist took place at the Hanover-square Rooms, on Monday morning, the 30th ult. The attendance was large and fashionable. We need hardly observe that the main interest of the concert rested with M. de Meyer. We have not room to particularise

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in rotation the different performances of the morning. But what shall we say of Léopold de Meyer? We are almost fearful of venturing on remarks concerning his playing. The more we hear him, it is certain, the more he astonishes us. When he is first heard attentively, you feel a sort of thankfulness he has concluded, for, the difficulties he surmounts are so astonishing, you insensibly attribute their faultlessness either to some obliquity in your own judgment, or to a particular happiness of the moment in the performer, which can only occur once, and, as you are stricken with surprise and wonder, you would not dissolve what you think, though you do not acknowledge it, partly delusion. But, as you hear and hear him again and again, your confidence confirms your astonishment; for it is a fact that they who hear him oftenest are the most amazed. The evidence of this is the breathless attention he excites in all our first-rate pianists whenever he plays: and this feeling and estimation are confirmed more and more every day, so that Léopold de Meyer is unquestionably twenty times in greater repute as a performer, among musical men in England, than he was at the commencement of the season. This is standing and defying the ordeal. They who know the difficulties of the instrument, and the years of intense application it requires to become an ordinary good pianist, must better appreciate the wonders wrought from Meyer's fingers than the mass of listeners that roar at his thunders. We ourselves consider him the greatest instrumental marvel we have ever listened to. He played, for the first time, his *fantasia* from *Semiramide*. He was encored, and played his *Lucia*. The first of these pieces is remarkably clever, and exhibits some of the greatest *impossibilities* (that's the only word suited to De Meyer's playing—*difficulties* is too inexpressive) we have heard in his compositions. In one part, the air, from the opening of the overture, is distinctly sustained, while he plays arpeggio passages with both hands through the whole extent of the instrument. The applause was tremendous. He also gave his *Russe fantasia* with wonderful effect. In short, there is little left to the critic where there is everything to praise, except to vary terms of adulation and reiterate opinions; and, as we incline neither to monotony nor tautology, we must give it up as an impracticable task to criticise Leopold de Meyer's performance until he leaves something to find fault with, or is surpassed by some one else in his *mirabilia*—both of which we place in the category of impossibilities. We understand M. de Meyer departs for America in the autumn. Nobody can doubt of the immense sensation he must create in Yankeeland.—*Musical World*, July 3, 1845.

No. 19.

TO LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

Pianist with a hundred fingers,
  Play on; I love to hear the sound
Thundering through the startled air,
  As if a tempest sighed around
    The lone and listening ear;
    Then dying
Like a pleasant zephyr, gently sighing
Over the painted and waving flowers,
    'Till every key
    Utters a harmony
  Like the murmur of the wind
  Lost in the beautiful heads
  That bow o'er those flower-beds;
  And then again rippling like some laughing stream,
That through the lazy summer hours
Singeth its lonely fountain song,
  Like a continuous dream,
  Which lasts through an evening long,
  When the amber glory crouches
  In gold on the heavy west,
  And the beautiful purple blushes
  Flush twilight's heavy breast.
And then again like the pealing thunder,
Which tears the dark grey clouds asunder,
  Startling sense and thought,
With the passion suddenly uttered,
  As if a fiery fancy wrought
    In every teeming note
      That muttered,
Or pealed its vehement music forth,
As storm-clouds, streaming from the north,
  In elemental grandeur breathe
    Their tempest-roar abroad.
  On still—methinks thy music is
    The voice of nature's God.
      Modifying,
      Breathing, dying,
      Hoping, sighing,
      Sobbing, crying,
      Thirsting and enjoying,
      Laughing, cloying,
  As universal nature doth,
  East, west, and north, and south,
    Beneath the golden air.
    Methinks a maid's young heart
    Lends to that music part
    Of all the pensive thoughts that lie
    In the lasting agony
    Of her unsettled love;
    Like the voice of a dove
    Who singeth from a fresh brake,
    In the morning, to its mate.
  Now—now—oh woe—oh deep despair!—
      How dreary—ay—how dreary—
      Life seems a-weary
    Beneath its heavy load.
  But now all glowed
  With happiness around me,
  And now, all that I feel is agony!
      Lonely and sad,
      Paused—I grow mad—
On—on—in storm—it is the shrieking cry,
The war shout, and the battle symphony—
      The cannon-roar,
      Where man, the merciless,
      Slakes his thirst for blood
        In the distress
        And woe, and tears,
      Wrenched out from suffering dust.
On still—'tis love—'tis passion,
    In all its hope and trust,
Poured forth in the joy and the fashion
Of panting souls, when lips are sighing
Upon each other, cloyed and dying
    With joy too deep.

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Thy delicate notes steep
My troubled senses in a sleep,
So dense and tender,
Sense cannot render
Count of its countless joy.
On—on—I cannot cloy—
On—on—I cannot tire—
Thy bursting touch of fire
Sweeps through each vein,
And fills my throbbing brain
With thoughts that slay
By passion overmuch;
Clouding Fancy's dreamy day
With griefs that chafe and crush.
Their bed
Around is spread
A melancholy night;
And then, again, a light,
As if a fairy chorus were
Mellowing the sunny air
Of the young spring.
Check—check thy hand,
And fling
Thy fingers o'er the chords no more—
I can endure no more—
No more—no more—
Break off. I wake,
And still throughout the chamber
The atmospheric cadences
Tremble and shake,
With all the melancholy left
When some ideal joy is reft,
And leaves the spirits lonelily to dream
Over the woes that are, and the joys that only seem;
For sorrow only hath endurance here,
The glad is ever false—the real, alone, the tear.

C. Rosenberg.

Musical World.

No. 20.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S CONCERT.

The concert of this admirable pianist took place on Monday morning, at the Hanover-square Rooms, and was no less brilliantly attended than its chief pieces were incomparably executed—these being, of course, the compositions and performances of De Meyer himself. His fantasia on *L'Elisir d'Amore* was a truly wonderful performance, no less for its unspeakable grace, tenderness, and delicacy, than for its prodigious force and fire. It was encored by acclamation; but in its place the artist substituted his singular and original *Air Russe*. His second piece was the *Carnaval de Venise*, and the third the *Marche d'Isly*. These three performances were nothing less than a succession of triumphs which would alone have placed this wonderful artist at the head of his profession, if he had not stood there before.—*Court Journal.*

No. 21.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER'S MORNING CONCERT.—HANOVER-SQUARE ROOMS.

A farewell concert was given on Monday morning by this *Roi des Pianistes*, previous to his departure for the purpose of astonishing Brother Jonathan; and right gloriously was the room filled, with all the beauty and fashion of London assembled together once more, for the purpose of hearing and taking a last look of their idol pianist. Some new *morceaux* were introduced for the first time by M. De Meyer, a grand fantasia founded on the *andante* movement of Rossini's overture to *Semiramide*, and a sparkling composition called *La Danse du Serail*. These are works that require not only the hundred eyes of Argus to enable a performer to read the notes, but also require the aid of a hundred fingers to perform them. The apparent ease with which M. De Meyer accomplishes all these monstrous difficulties is truly wonderful, and his manner seems to say *ce n'est rien*. Passages consisting of octaves, tenths, sixths, thirds, and chords; *arpeggios*, chromatic scales, and florid passages, from bass to treble, and from treble to bass, all *pêle-mêle*, but never discordant or in the least offensive to the ear: all these wonders of the modern pianoforte school are executed by this astonishing pianist with the most wonderful ease. This gentleman seems even fatigue-proof, and the enthusiastic *encores* from his audience are always responded to with a freshness and vigour of execution only possible to be extracted from such an artist as De Meyer.—*London Journal*, July 5, 1845.

No. 22.

MUSICAL UNION.

The director's *matinée musicale* on Tuesday last, at the Princess's Concert-room, was a proud event for Mr. Ella. Not only was the attendance of the members very numerous, but many professional persons paid for stalls, whilst others came expressly to London to hear the classical chamber music executed by the distinguished talent engaged at the Musical Union during the past season. * * * The lion pianist, Léopold de Meyer, was encored in his solo. Never were the excellencies of this great performer more successfully developed, or better appreciated. The delicacy, grace, and power of his playing elicited loud and continuous applause.—*Morning Post*, July 10.

No. 23.

Léopold de Meyer—the hero of a thousand triumphs, the hundred-fingered demi-god of Erard's thunder-proof horizontal seven-octaves—electrified the audience in his *Elisir d'Amore* fantasy, and on receiving a boisterous *encore* resumed his seat at the instrument, and made impossibilities seem nothing

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in the fanciful *Danse du Serail*, one of his most agreeable compositions. The concert took place on Tuesday morning, before a highly-respectable audience, in the Princess's Theatre.—*Musical World*, July 10, 1845.

No. 24.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER, the celebrated "lion pianist," has been astonishing the audiences at the Haymarket Theatre with his wonderful performances on the piano. He first appeared at the benefit of the charming and talented actress, Miss Julia Bennett, and his success was so great that Mr. Webster, the spirited lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, engaged him to play every evening during the present week on the most liberal terms. M. De Meyer has been encored on each occasion with the utmost enthusiasm and unanimity, the members of the orchestra joining zealously in the applause. He has performed, among other pieces, the *Marche Marocaine*, the *Lucrece Borgia* fantasia, the *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the *Marche du Serail*, the *Airs Russes*, the notturno in D flat (*Le Depart*), and severa other of his most popular compositions.—*Musical World*, July 30, 1845.

No. 25.

LES OBSEQUIES DE NAPOLEON.

A Funeral March.

BY M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

March on, march on, march on—
The ashes of the greatest man are coming,
Who ever trod upon this weary earth.
March on, march on, march on—
The chariot through the winter mist is looming,
Which brings the conqueror captive to his home,
That he may slumber in the mighty dome
He reared. The imperial dust shall sleep
In the soil which gave it birth.
March on, march on, march on—
To the bray of the drum, and the trumpet deep.
In the land of his glory, the glorious shall sleep,
For the land of the fame is the land of the birth.
Thousands are round, and yet the popular voice
Hath neither wail nor mirth,
A shame has silenced that which might rejoice;
And tears were little worth.
Silence on one and all.
March on, march on, march on—
Napoleon cometh home
From his lonely dungeon tomb,
To the land of his birth.
Awe may not smile nor weep—
In the land of his greatness, the great one shall sleep,
For the land of the fame is the land of the birth.

March on, march on, march on—
The ashes of the profit-power are coming,
Which taught mankind that crowns and thrones are nought.
March on, march on, march on—
The chariot through the far hoar-frost is looming,
Which brings the ashes of the Christ of war
Home to the land, o'er which his saviour-star
Had blazed. The warrior dust shall sleep
In the land which gave it birth.
March on, march on, march on—
To the roar of the drum, and the trumpet deep.
In the land of his grandeur, the grand one shall sleep,
For the land of the fame is the land of the birth.
Thousands are round, and yet their breath is hushed,
As the calm tread shakes earth,
The present shame of this sad hour has crushed
The pride it else were worth.
Silence on one and all.
March on, march on, march on—
The Emperor cometh home,
From his distant dungeon tomb,
To the land of his birth.
Awe dares not smile nor weep.
In the land of his might, the mighty one shall sleep,
For the land of the fame is the land of the birth.

[The character of the music will, with those who have heard it, prove the only possible apology for the apparent monotony of thought shown in the artificial repetition of similar phrases in the small poem which it suggested. If not, I can but regret my admiration of its composer should have suggested the attempt to render in verse the power and solemnity of its thought.—C. R.]—*Musical World*, July 24, 1845.

No. 26.

EXTRACT FROM A MUSICAL MORNING.

A few days ago we received an invitation from Mr. J. W. Davison, to spend a morning with him at his rooms in Berners-street; and, although he at the same time informed us that we should meet almost every instrumental artist of note in London, we were certainly unprepared for the treat which awaited us. On our arrival, in addition to the salutation of our host and numerous professional friends, we were saluted with a thick cloud of tobacco smoke, which somewhat obscured our vision, but we soon got used to the atmosphere, and began to look around us. Moustaches undoubtedly carried the day, but the talent of the wearers fully warranted their assumption in every case. It was indeed an assemblage of artists rarely to be met with. On the sofa was seated Sivori, one of the most amiable and liberal of great violinists; and by his side was Osborne, a pianist of the true school, and an enthusiast in his art. Earnestly engaged in conversation round the table, were Rousselot, Drechsler, Vieuxtemps, Sainton,

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Holmes, Dorrell, &c.; and many continental instrumentalists smoked away at the window, evidently awaiting the musical feast which was set forth in the programmes. We were talking to Mr. Wessel, and congratulating him both upon his recent marriage and his return to England, when a sudden rush was made to the pianoforte, and all eyes were turned towards a rather stout and exceedingly prepossessing young man, who made his way through the expectant group, and seated himself at the instrument: this was Léopold de Meyer. We could see that he was preparing for rather warm work, for he tucked up his coat-sleeves, and deposited his cigar-case upon the instrument. All eyes were riveted upon him, and, after a few good-humoured jokes, off he went; and marvellous, indeed, was his performance: nothing can describe it—it was a whirlwind—a hurricane—not a shower of notes, but a perfect storm of sound. We could not criticise it at the time, for it fairly took our breath away, and we could only gasp out "Wonderful!" Even now, in our calmer moments, we have asked ourselves whether these extraordinary displays of what *may* be achieved by ten fingers have really anything to do with the true and legitimate use of the art; but we have chased away the idea, and arrived, by degrees, at that Pantheistic state of mind which teaches us to view all things as good, and not to consider too critically and curiously the effect of any isolated specimen. Music is universal; and he who insists upon clinging to any one style is too much a sectarian for the advanced state of present feeling. Léopold de Meyer, however, is one of those pianists who can please or astonish at will; and his delicate passages and tasteful ornaments are unsurpassed by any performer living. Just as we were about to depart, Léopold de Meyer again walked in, and was carried almost in triumph to the pianoforte; where he performed some more of his wonders, and ended our morning most brilliantly.—*Musical Gentleman.*

No. 27.

SOLO, PIANO.—NOTTURNO AND AIRS RUSSES. BY LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

The compliment paid to the "Musical Union" by this pianist offering to play music of a classical composer, with accompaniments, deserves honourable mention in this record. Exceptions to general rules we make only for extraordinary occasions; and we prefer to hear this pianist play the above solo for the same reason that the seven musicians, directors of the Philharmonic Society, declined to allow him to perform a standard concerto at their concerts, viz.: that our members may have an opportunity of admiring his talent as a composer, and appreciating the advanced state to which the executive art of pianoforte playing is now brought, accomplished by the genius and perseverance of this eminent artist. Having been allowed the privilege of selecting compositions of Meyer—which in our judgment are best calculated to exhibit his powers to advantage—we have purposely chosen the above two pieces, in the playing of which his beautiful and pearly touch in passages of delicacy and expression will be sensibly felt, and will also develop his great faculty of tastefully phrasing the most difficult combination of parts and elegant *floriture*, with a wonderful power of finger,—in this particular surpassing every other pianist. Meyer never fails to astonish *the million* by his *tours de force*, and we leave him to captivate our chosen few by an active display of his intellect.—*Ella's Musical Union*, August, 1845.

No. 28.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

Léopold de Meyer, the celebrated German pianist, made his first appearance on the English stage at the Haymarket Theatre, for the benefit of Miss Julia Bennett, when his performance excited so much admiration that he was engaged by the manager for a few nights, and on last Monday evening he performed, after the comedy, an "Introduction and Airs Russes," composed and arranged by himself, on the pianoforte, in a style so brilliant and novel as to elicit the most rapturous applause from a crowded audience. A general call being made for an *encore*, M. Meyer played a fantasia upon another theme, which was, if possible, more successful than the preceding. No performer that we have ever heard, not even Liszt or Thalberg, equals M. Meyer in brilliancy and rapidity of execution. The piano, beneath his hands, is a totally different instrument from that which we are accustomed to hear in the drawing-room or the boudoir; with him it is a full orchestra, pouring a flood of rich modulated harmony, from the most delicate silvery tones, to the grand rolling diapason of the organ; it is, indeed, most wonderful to hear the volume of sound that M. Meyer can produce from the piano. It is the *ne plus ultra* of combined dexterity and genius in the practical art of music.—*Sunday Times.*

No. 29.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

The success of this celebrated pianist, at the Haymarket Theatre, has been so triumphant, that Mr. Webster has re-engaged him for another week. The untiring assiduity of the lessee of this elegant establishment to afford amusement to the public, is worthy the highest praise. Crowds have flocked nightly to listen to the wonderful performances of M. de Meyer, who has on every occasion been honoured by an encore no less enthusiastic than unanimous.—*Musical World*, August 17, 1845.

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No. 30.

MADAME EUGENIE GARCIA'S MATINEE MUSICALE.

The *locale* of this entertainment, which occurred on Monday morning, was charmingly picturesque and rural. The Hon. Mrs. Leicester Stanhope kindly accorded the use of her elegant mansion, Ashburnham-house, Chelsea, to the fair concert-giver, and the arrangements were in the highest degree *recherché*. The politeness and hospitality of the host and hostess deserve record, and will not be soon forgotten by the visitors. Madame Eugenie Garcia is an established favourite with the English public; her merits are well known and appreciated. It is enough, therefore, to say that she executed two arias with her accustomed fervour of expression and artist-like perfection. The "lion pianist," Léopold de Meyer, performed his fantasia on *l'Elisir d'Amore* in such a style of perfection as to elicit a rapturous and unanimous *encore*. On returning to the pianoforte, M. De Meyer performed his notturno in D flat, and his fantasia on *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the ladies crowding round the instrument and listening to his extraordinary performances with breathless attention and frequent exclamations of astonishment. Messrs. Benedict and Jules de Glimes accompanied the vocal music in admirable style, and the whole programme gave the most unequivocal satisfaction. A more agreeable and elegant *matinée* we have seldom been present at.—*Times*, Aug., 1845.

No. 31.

TO LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

(On hearing him play at Herr Staudigl's Concert.)

Hush! 'tis the voice of birds,
  Throughout the forest green,
No need there are of words
  To paint the sylvan scene.
The nightingale and thrush,
  The soaring larks are there,
From every tree and bush
  Their music fills the air.

Hark! to the distant storm—
  Raised by De Meyer's hand;
The demon rears his form,
  Mute is the feather'd band:
The crash of elements is mixed
  With voices under ground,
We listen breathless and transfixed
  To that low unearthly sound.

And lo! 'tis joy again,
  The thunder dies away,
The birds o'er forest, hill, and plain
  Have trimmed their plumage gay,
And he, the enchanter, bows to all,
And leaves for aye each heart in thrall.

MRS. VALENTINE BARTHOLOMEW.

Musical World, July 24, 1845.

No. 32.

LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

A splendid gold medal has been transmitted to this celebrated pianist, from the *Cercle des Arts*, in Brussels, with the following letter:—

Norfolk-street, Strand.

Monsieur,—I am instructed by M. de Beriot to transmit to you the gold medal which was awarded to you by the *Cercle des Beaux Arts*, at Brussels. It is some time since this medal has been struck, but we were not aware how to forward it to you in safety; the diploma of honorary member of the society, which was decreed you at the same time, has been sent to the residence of the Prince de Chimay, to Mesmars, in France, but has not yet been returned to us. I much regret, Monsieur, that I have not been able to do myself the pleasure of waiting upon you to thank you personally for all the pleasure you have given to the members of the society by the exercise of your unrivalled talent. With assurances of the highest consideration and esteem, I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Monsieur,

Your very obedient,

AD. LE MARDY DE BEAULIEU,
Secretary to the Cercle des Beaux Arts.

P.S.—I leave at eight o'clock this evening for the Continent. Excuse my not presenting you this in person.—*Musical World*, July 24, 1845.

No. 33.

FROM MR. WILLIS'S LETTER, NO. 6, TO GENERAL MORRIS, OF THE "NEW MIRROR."

Since I wrote that I had not heard De Meyer, I have been to a morning concert where he played. The enthusiasm in the audience was boundless. It was a concert on the piano, rather than one player's performance. He made the whole instrument "discourse most eloquent music" at once, and with no confusion. There were but two or three men present, and some hundreds of ladies, and the clapping by the little hands was as loud as in a crowded theatre. You will make much of him in America, I think.

I will not lengthen this letter by touching on any other topic.

Yours faithfully,

N. P. WILLIS.

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TESTIMONIALS OF THE FRENCH PRESS.

No. 1.

Quoi qu'il en soit, M. Gutmann nous paraît un jeune artiste d'avenir. Celui de M. Léopold de Meyer est tout fait comme pianiste prestigieux et prodigieux. A la cour du czar, à celles de l'empereur d'Autriche, du roi de Prusse, dans Athènes et dans Constantinople, près d'Othon et du sultan, M. Meyer a obtenu un égal succès. S'il est extrêmement agréable de l'entendre sur le piano, il ne l'est pas moins d'écouter ses observations et réflexions philosophiques qu'il fait sur ces grands acteurs du monde politique. Dans le dernier concert qu'il a donné chez Érard, sa pensée musicale et ses doigts seuls se sont évertués. Il a dit, avec cette prodigalité d'artiste qui sème ses idées avec autant de plaisir que de facilité, variations, études, nocturnes, galop de bravoure, des marches, des fantaisies, tout cela, animé d'une verve, d'un entrain qui se communique à l'auditoire, par la puissance d'un rhythme que rien n'arrête plus lorsqu'il est lancé, et que le virtuose orne de mille caprices accessoires. On compterait plutôt les grains de sable du désert de Sahara que les notes qui sortent de ses doigts dans sa *Marche Marocaine*, dans son *Carnaval de Venise*, et dans ses variations sur *les Hirondelles* de Félicien David, cette petite et simple mélodie que M. de Meyer a transcrite et variée pour le piano. Sa *fantaisie* sur la *Norma* a fait un vif plaisir. Le chant *Casta diva* y est traité d'une délicieuse manière. Il semble qu'on voit scintiller des milliers d'étoiles autour de l'astre de la nuit, par la suavité des mélodies, la limpidité des effets harmoniques dont l'auteur a semé cette douce et mystérieuse élégie musicale. En sortant de la rêverie où cela vous plonge, on est tout étonné que tant de poésie sorte du cerveau et des doigts de ce Roger-Bontemps, pour qui la vie semble une route parcourue en chemin de fer.—*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, Janvier, 1845.

No. 2.

D'un talent fin, sûr, fait et parfait, ayant reculé les bornes du joli par son phrasé élégant, son trille fini, son inconcevable vélocité, M. Léopold de Meyer, pianiste de l'Empereur d'Autriche, M. Léopold de Meyer a étonné le public français qui commence cependant à ne plus s'étonner d'entendre exécuter des choses impossibles sur le piano. Ce nouveau virtuose semble se jouer de toutes les difficultés. Dans son premier morceau sur des motifs de *Lucrezia Borgia*, il a chanté cependant de ses deux mains d'une façon charmante, et il a interprété sur le piano et de la manière la plus originale et la plus brillante, les variations d'Ernst pour le violon, *le Carnaval de Venise*, qu'il a fait précéder d'une charmante introduction que nous avons tout lieu de croire improvisée. — *Revue et Gazette Musicale*, Janvier 19, 1845.

No. 3.

Léopold de Meyer est en grande vogue dans les salons parisiens. Cette semaine, il a joué chez le Ministre des Finances, M. Lacave-Laplagne; chez Madame la Duchesse Decazes; chez Madame Orfila. Partout il a produit la plus vive sensation. Thalberg a quitté Paris la semaine dernière; il est allé á Londres, où il demeurera jusqu à la fin de la saison.—*La France Musicale*, Janvier 26, 1845.

No. 4.

Nous ne nous étions pas trompés en disant précédemment que Léopold de Meyer était un des plus grand pianistes du moment. Notre jugement a été ratifié d'une maniere éclatante par l'enthousiasme, qu'il a excité dans la grande et belle fantaisie sur *Lucrezia Borgia*. Impossible de porter plus loin l'habileté mécanique, de réunir à un plus haut degré à la fois la puissance et la délicatesse du toucher. Léopold de Meyer a bien fait de venir chercher à Paris la consécration de l'immense réputation qu'il s'etait déjà faite à l'étranger. Le voilà désormais placé en première ligne, à côté de Listz.—*Le Monde Musical*, Janvier 30, 1845.

No. 5.

LE CONCERT DE M. HECTOR BERLIOZ.

D'Homère à Hercule il n'y a qu'un pas, et d'Hercule à Léopold de Meyer, le pianiste titanique, il n'y a que la main. La formidable énergie de son jeu a frappé de stupeur tout l'auditoire; et pourtant M. de Meyer avait un doigt blessé! de plus, une demi-heure avant de paraître au concert, il avait si parfaitement versé qu'il était presque évanoui lorsqu'on l'a retiré du fond de sa voiture! A moins de croire à la fameuse recette du baume de Fier-à-bras, tant recommandé par Don Quichotte, il faut supposer que M. de Meyer a quelque chose du géant fabuleux, qui retrouvait toutes ses forces en touchant la terre du bout du doigt. Cette petite chute sur le sol a décuplé la vigueur du nouvel Antée. Sous ses deux mains souveraines, ce piano, si puissant, si beau, sorti des ateliers de M. Erard, a rendu tout ce qu'il pouvait de sonorité. Le rhythme saltatoire et la couleur étrange de la *Marche Marocaine* out complété le succès.—*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, Fevrier 23, 1845.

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No. 6.

LE CONCERT DE LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

Nous avons dit dans le dernier numéro de la *Gazette Musicale* que nous reviendrions sur le concert donné chez Érard, par M. Léopold de Meyer. Ce n'est pas chose facile de donner une place distincte à ce virtuose, parmi tous les pianistes qui défilent devant nous et nous passent par les oreilles. Si l'on veut analyser celui-ci sous le rapport du mécanisme, c'est bientôt fait, car il faut se borner à dire que la prestesse, la netteté, la délicatesse et l'énergie du toucher n'ont point encore été fondues ensemble à ce point de perfection, et qu'on n'a jamais mieux résumé dans l'exécution le nom primitif de l'instrument : forte-piano ou piano-forte ; c'est-à-dire qu'il est impossible de passer du fort au doux *et vice versa*, d'une manière aussi marquée. Ses finales mélodiques sont d'une ténuité à peine saisissable à l'ouïe, et ses grands effets harmoniques ont toute la puissante sonorité de l'orchestre. Et maintenant, si nous recherchons d'où vient l'empire que M. de Meyer exerce sur son auditoire, nous le trouverons surtout dans son rhythme imperiéux, dont il ne se départ jamais. Son phrasé bien accusé contraste en cela avec celui de la plupart des autres pianistes qui boitent à plaisir dans leur mélodie tourmentée, maladive, dans cette mélodie qui ne procède, n'entre en matière que par la note sensible, par des valeurs alterées ou des appogiatures. M. de Meyer, homme de décision, semblable à ces généraux de l'empire, se met à son piano comme ceux-ci montaient à cheval et criaient : en avant ! De même qu 'Augereau, Murat ou Ney, il va, va, marche au pas redoublé ; ou galope sur la route de la gloire, sabrant tout ce qui s'oppose à son passage, tourbillonnant au milieu des plus inextricables difficultés qu'il brise sous ses doigts de fer. Dans le délire, dans l'ivresse de l'art qui locomotionne sa volonté, le rhyhme est pour lui comme une sorte de fatalité à laquelle il semble obéir malgré qu'il en ait, qui l'étreient, le domine, le pousse et ne s'éteient que sous les enthousiastes applaudisements de tous ses auditeurs.—*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, Fevrier 23, 1845.

No. 7.

CONCERTS DE M. LEOPOLD DE MEYER.

Entre cette foule de pianistes qui tous les ans viennent sabattre sur la capitale comme des nuées de sautorelles, il en est bien peu qui parviennent à se faire jour et à acquerir de la renommée. On a beau faire insérer maintenant dans les journaux qu'il vient de debarquer un prodige, un artiste miraculeux, le public ne se laisse plus prendre à ces réclames. L'Empereur de la Chine en personne viendrait-il à Paris en se faisant prévenir d'une réputation de flutiste, de pianiste ou de violoniste de première espèce, qu'on n'ajouterait aucune foi à la réclame ou à l'annonce. Pour que l'artiste soit accepté maintenant du public, il faut qu'il paye argent comptant, qu'il ait un talent réel, un talent hors ligne. Il est facile de se faire précéder d'une grande réputation à Paris, mais il est bien difficile de soutenir cette réputation lorsqu'on est arrivé dans la capitale. Le jour où nous avons annoncé l'apparition d'un pianiste extraordinaire qui fait école dans la musique, on s'est mis à crier encore une fois que nous voulions improviser un nom et un talent. Dieu merci, nous n'avons pas eu cette prétention. Lorsque nous avons proclamé que Léopold de Meyer était un pianiste, un grand pianiste, un très grand pianiste, et de plus un compositeur des plus distingués, nous avions entendu cet exécutant merveilleux ; nous savions que le public, après avoir lu nos éloges, ne se trouverait pas désabusé en écoutant l'artiste. Le succes de Léopold de Meyer a été au delà même de nos espérances. Le célèbre pianiste a donné quatre concerts, et chaque fois la foule émerveillée l'a salué par les applaudissements les plus enthousiastes. Cinq de ses compositions surtout ont produit la plus vive sensation, *Norma*, *Lucrèce Borgia*, *Les Hirondelles*, et *La Marche Marocaine*. Mais, disons-le, la *Marche Marocaine* a tout écrasé, et chaque fois que l'auteur l'a fait entendre elle a été bissée et répétée, au milieu d'unanimes applaudissements. Berlioz, dans un de ses moments d'enthousiasme, qui l'honorent et qui prouvent en lui des sentiments d'artiste très-élevés, s'est emparé de cette même marche et l'a orchestrée admirablement. C'est le plus bel éloge que nous puissions faire de la composition de Léopold de Meyer. Nous n'avons qu'une crainte maintenant, celle d'entendre la *Marche Marocaine* dans tous les concerts, soir et matin, et peut-être même sur l'orgue de Barbarie, le roi le plus faux de tous les instruments populaires. Il y a dans les compositions de Meyer de la simplicité, de la grâce, quelque fois de la bizarrerie, souvent une coquetterie charmante, et toujours une originalité qui le mettent en dehors de tous les autres pianistes. Comme exécutant, Léopold de Meyer a passé la difficulté jusqu'à ses dernières limites. Une admirable justesse, une variété d'effets délicieux, une puissance de géant, voilà ce qui le distingue. Léopold de Meyer va nous quitter pour aller en Angleterre recueillir de nouveaux triomphes. Il pourra, quand il le voudra reprendre le chemin de Paris, et il peut être assuré de trouver en France l'accueil que mérite son immense talent.—*La France Musicale*, 13 Avril, 1845.

No. 8.

De M. Billet à M. Léopold de Meyer il y a tout un monde. Si l'un tient de St. Pétersburg, l'autre procéde de l'Orient par la bizarrerie, l'originalité, la couleur et l'imprévu de son jeu. M. Léopold de Meyer est le pianiste le plus voyageur de tout le continent. Il a donné plus de cinq cents concerts, et possède une précieuse collection de ses affiches écrites dans toutes les langues, de journaux turcs, persans, grecs, chinois, russes, allemands et français, chantant ses louanges dans tous les idiômes et sur toutes les gammes. Rien qu' à voir M. de Meyer étendre ses vingt doigts sur le piano, et sa figure s'épanouir a ce contact, on devine qu'il est là dans son élément, comme le poisson dans l'eau.

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Otez à Léopold de Meyer son piano et son chibouck, et il ne restera plus qu'un corps inanimé. Personne n'a encore réalisé les tours de force qu'exécute ce pianiste, le plus véloce de tous les pianistes véloces. Son genre est tranché, net, et s'éloigne de tous les autres. Par cela même, Léopold de Meyer est appelé à un grand succès, succès qui, du reste, s'est déjà réalisé complétement. Mais pour le consolider, il faut que le virtuose ne fasse qu'apparaître et disparaître. Prompt comme l'éclair, Meyer doit frapper comme la foudre; il faut qu'il échappe à l'analyse et qu'il évite surtout de jouer sept morceaux de suite comme un simple mortel. Léopold de Meyer a le jeu d'un Méphistophélès; mais s'il joue sept morceaux de suite, comme Franz Listz, le masque tombe, l'homme reste et le diable s'évanouit.***—*Le Menestrel*, Avril 15, 1845.

No. 9.

Il nous reste à parler du Conservatoire et de M. Berlioz, les colonnes de la grande musique, ces représentans de la haute école,—j'allais dire de la vieille garde. Le conservatoire annonce sa neuvième séance, et Berlioz a fait dimanche dernier ses adieux au cirque des Champs-Elysées. Il avait instrumenté pour cette séance la fameuse *Marche Marocaine* de Meyer. Le succès a été foudroyant. Un ordre du pour a dû être expédié au Maréchal Bugeaud pour faire populariser cette marche en Algérie par nos musiques militaires. Il y a là de quoi soumettre toutes les peuplades Africaines, Bedouins, Arabes, Kabyles et autres. MM. Berlioz et Léopold de Meyer méritent chacun un yatagan d'honneur.—*Le Menestrel*, Avril 15, 1845.

No. 10.

LE CONCERT DE M. FELICIEN DAVID, AU THEATRE ITALIEN.

Le concert de Félicien David, qui a eu lieu Samedi dernier, a été des plus brillants. La salle était comble et on a refusé plus de *cinq cents personnes* à la porte. Jamais, en vérité, on n'a vu pareil empressement et pareil enthousiasme. Le concert se composait de l'ode-symphonie, le *Désert*, du final de la symphonie en *Mi Bémol;* des *Hirondelles* et du *Chybouk*, chantés par M. Al. Dupont; des deux morceaux nouveaux pour instruments à cordes, une *promenade sur mer*, et *cinquième soirée d'automne;* enfin M. Léopold de Meyer a éxécuté une fantaisie sur les *Hirondelles*, et sa célèbre *Marche Marocaine*. La salle entière a applaudi le célèbre pianiste, qui, dans ce concert, a déployé toute son agilité, sa grâce, et son énergie. La fantaisie sur les *Hirondelles* est une belle composition remplie des plus charmants effets. Le pianiste a fait sur le délicieux motif de Félicien David de ravissantes variations; l'exécutant et le compositeur ont eu le même droit aux applaudissements et aux bravos. Quant à la *Marche Marocaine*, il faut avoir entendu Léopold de Meyer pour se rendre compte de l'originalité, de l'excentricité de ces compositions. Après ce morceau qui a soulevé l'enthousiasme, des bouquets sont tombés aux pieds et sur la tête du pianiste.—*La France Musicale*, 27 Avril, 1845.

No. 11.

Léopold de Meyer, le célèbre pianiste de Moscou, fait en ce moment le principal ornement de tous nos grands salons. Cette semaine le grand artiste a joué, avec un égal succès d'enthousiasme, dans les soirées de M. le Duc de Cases, chez M. Lacave-Laplange, Ministre des Finances, et chez M. Orfila. Il est difficile de se faire une idée de l'immense effet qu'il produit partout.—*Revue et Gazette Musicale*, 26 Janvier, 1845.

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